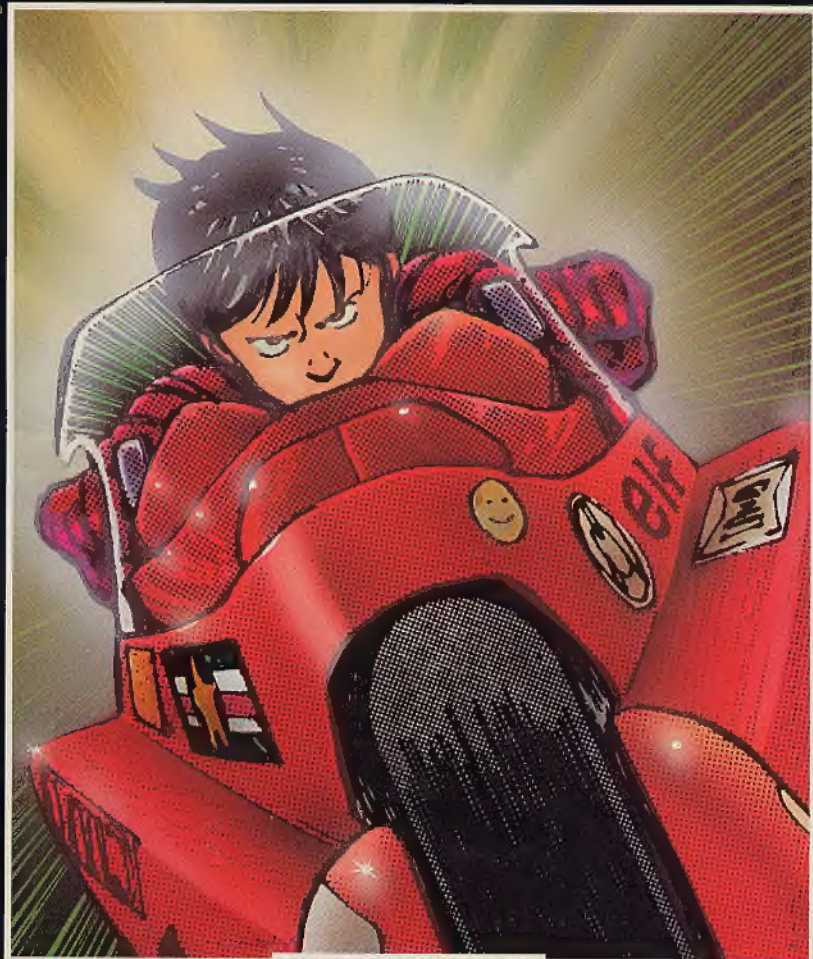



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KATSUHIRO OTOMO



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AKIRA

BY KATSUHIRO OTOMO

CHAPTER 5

CYCLE WARS

WHAT HAS GONE BEFORE

The year is 2030. The world is rebuilding from World War III. In **Neo-Tokyo**, plans are being made to hold the next Olympics in the "old city"—where, thirty-eight years before, the first of the bombs fell.

Kaneda and his friends, teenage delinquents, make an unauthorized motorcycle run into the old city to check out the old site. They encounter a terrified child, known only as **Number 26**, possessing extraordinary telekinetic abilities. During the encounter, the paranormal boy gravely injures **Tetsuo**, one of Kaneda's close friends. Then, he vanishes.

The next night, at **Harukiya**, a tough local dive, **Kaneda** attempts, unsuccessfully, to pick up a newcomer, **Kay**. In fact, she and her companion, **Ryu**, are part of an underground resistance group dedicated to learning what is happening in the old city

and putting a stop to it.

Trouble ensues, and both delinquents and resistance fighters again encounter **Number 26**. **Ryu** attempts to reassure the paranormal boy, but **Kaneda** is anxious to punish him for injuring **Tetsuo**. As they argue, mysterious soldiers pursuing **Number 26** reach the scene, armed and ready. A fire-fight results.

Then the ominous **Colonel** in charge of the covert operation appears with a secret weapon—**Number 27**, a crippled paranormal child named **Masaru**. **Masaru** astonishes the resistance fighters by addressing **Number 26** as **Takashi**. **Kay** and **Ryu** had previously assumed that **Number 26** was the Colonel's ultimate weapon—the as-yet unseen paranormal giant code-named **Akira**.

Kaneda provokes a crisis by pretending to threaten **Takashi**, who is exhibiting symptoms of drug withdrawal. **Takashi** responds with telekinetic upheavals. **Kaneda** is again separated from the resistance fighters, but he manages to intercept and hide a pill meant for **Takashi**, who is recaptured by the Colonel's men.

The next day, **Tetsuo**—who following his accident was taken to a hospital by soldiers—reappears in school, seemingly



Kaneda



Tetsuo



Kay



Ryu

all right. However, during **Tetsuo's** treatment, the **Colonel** has learned that the delinquent has great psychic potential.

Kaneda has a girlfriend in the school infirmary analyze the drug intended for **Takashi**. It is similar in substance to pills **Kaneda** and his friends take, but unbelievably concentrated and powerful.

Eager for action, **Kaneda**, **Tetsuo** and their gang head out for a rumble with their chief rivals—the vicious **Clown** gang.

A member of the **Clowns** comes and begins to beat **Tetsuo**. **Kaneda** and the rest of his friends rescue **Tetsuo**, who astonishes them, first by displaying an uncharacteristic bloodthirstiness, and then by challenging **Kaneda's** authority.

Determined not to let a new human weapon escape him, the **Colonel** goes to the school the next day to collect **Tetsuo**.

Under the treatments of the **Colonel's** chief medical officer, **Tetsuo** begins to exhibit powerful psychic abilities...and to undergo great pain.

Meanwhile, **Kaneda**, trying to spy on the **Colonel** and learn what is happening to **Tetsuo**, re-encounters the members of the resistance, and is brought back to their headquarters. Questioned by **Ryu**, he denies all knowledge of the

stolen drug.

Kiyoko, another of the psychic children under the **Colonel's** control, announces to her master the disastrous news that **Akira**—who is asleep, and expected to remain so for some time—is going to awaken in the near future. Meanwhile, at the resistance hideout, **Kaneda** encounters a ghost-like apparition of himself, shouting **Akira's** name.

When soldiers enter the resistance hideout in force, **Kaneda** and **Kay** manage together to escape to **Harukiya**, where the bartender agrees to shelter them.

Overwhelmed by pain, **Tetsuo** breaks out of the **Colonel's** installation, leaving death in his wake. When he is cornered alone in the street by the **Clown** Gang, **Tetsuo** uses his burgeoning powers to slaughter those who oppose him. He takes control of the gang, letting them live in return for the massive amounts of drugs required to stave off his agony.

Kaneda, anxious to recover the motorcycle he left behind when he "joined" the resistance, eludes **Kay**. He is nearly caught by soldiers in the underground tunnels. **Kay** gets to the lost bike first, and when **Kaneda** joins her, they are able to escape again.



Takashi



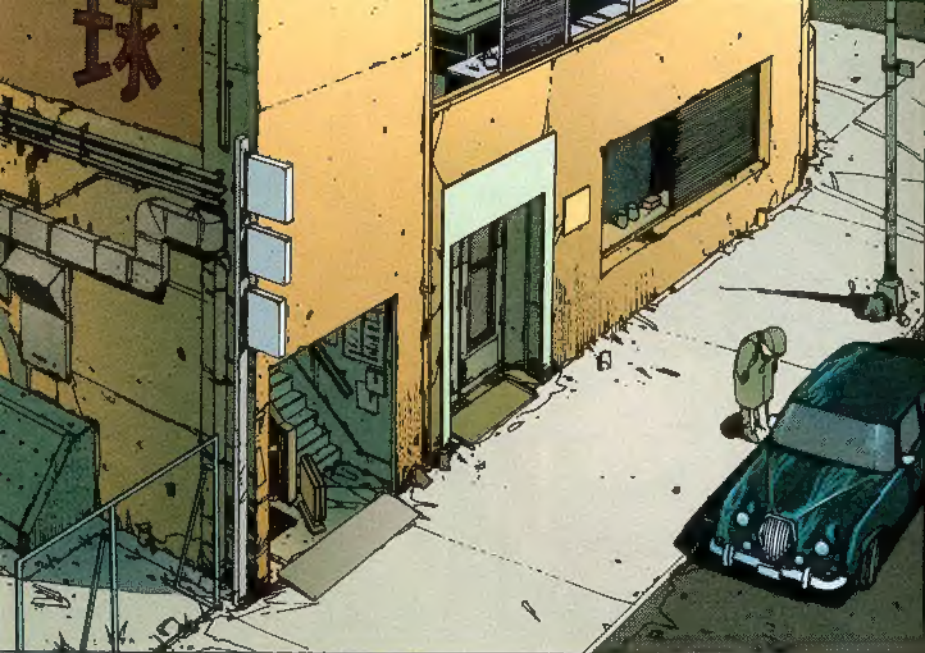
The Colonel

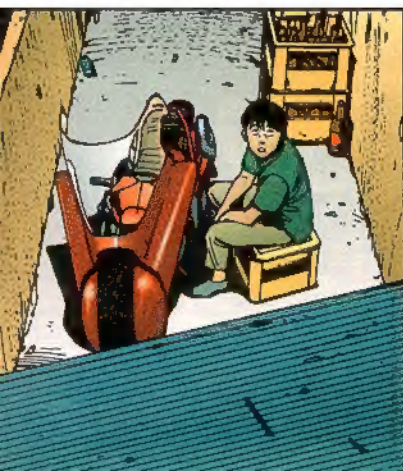
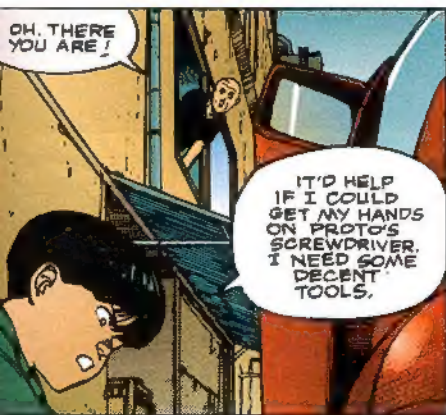
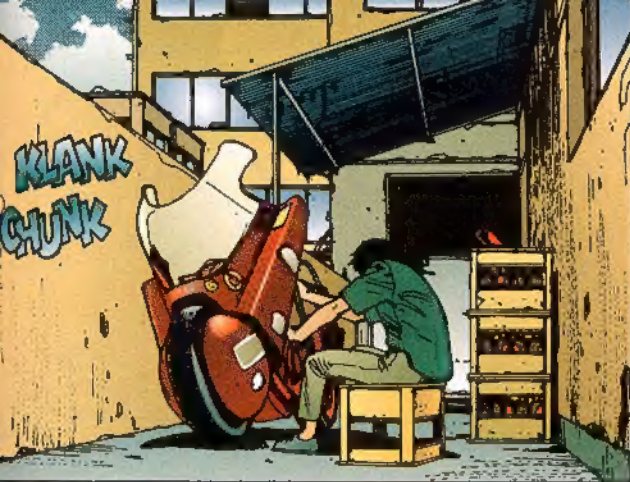


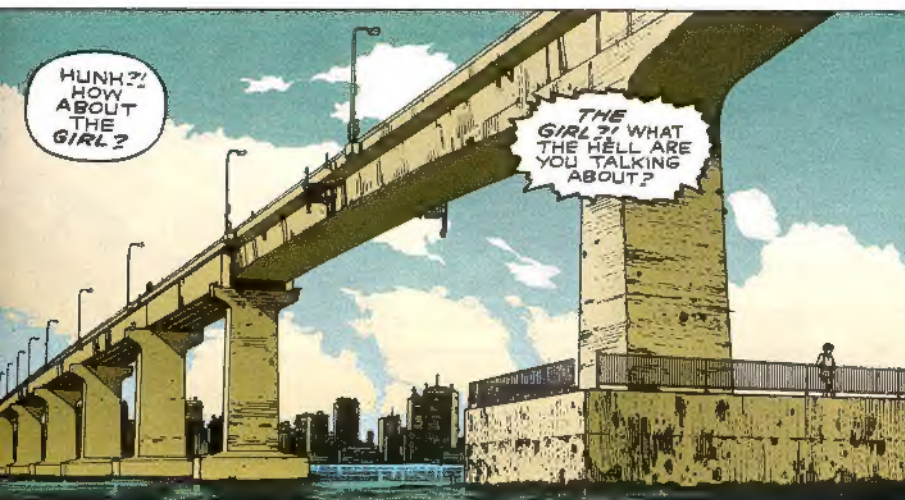
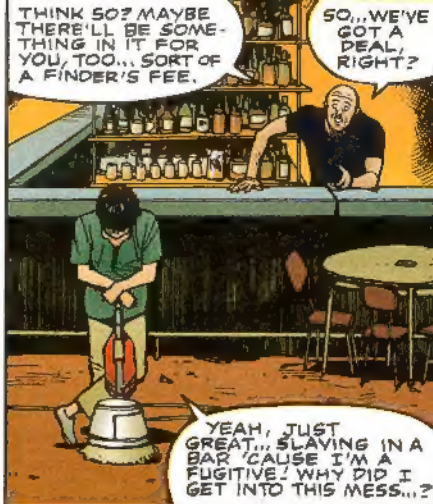
Masaru



Yamagata





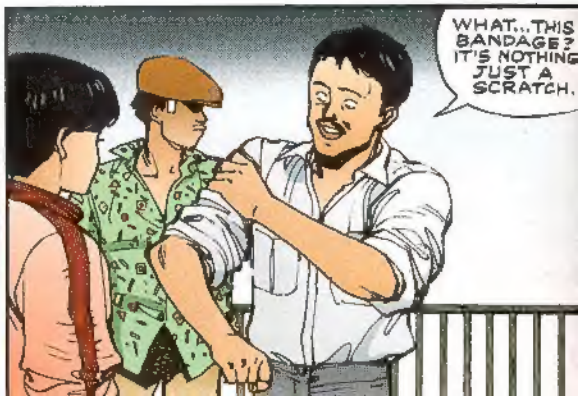
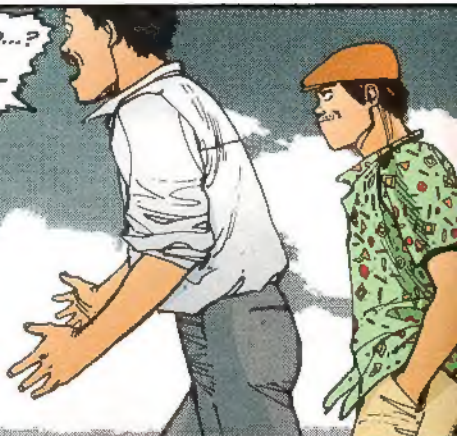


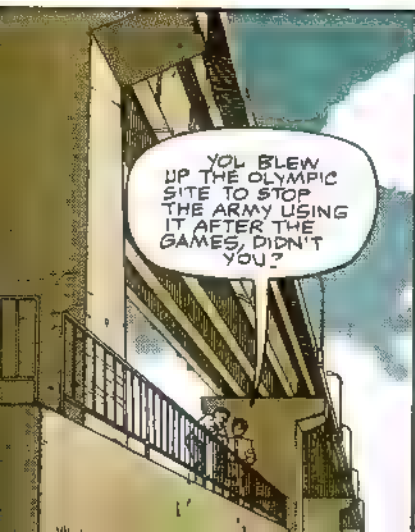
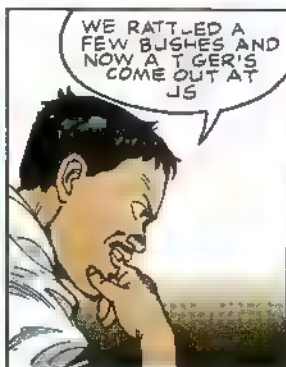
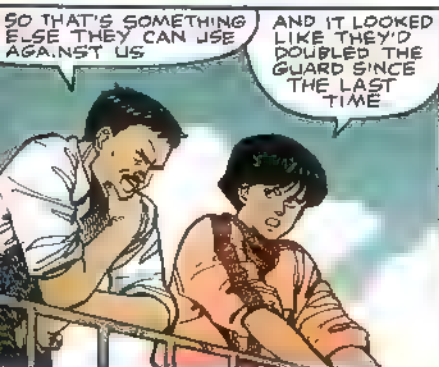
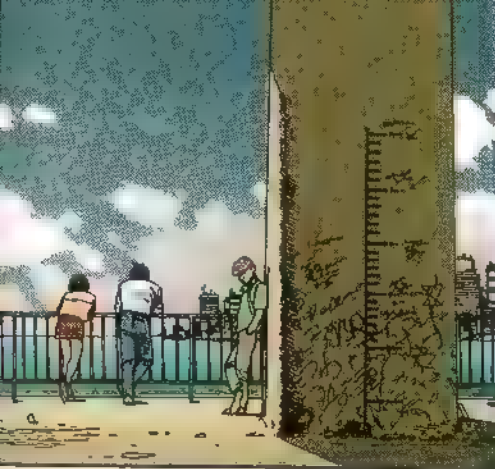


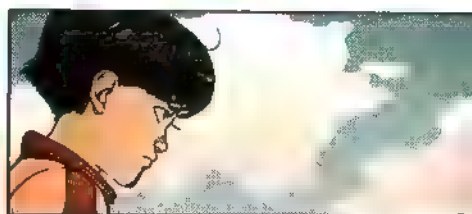
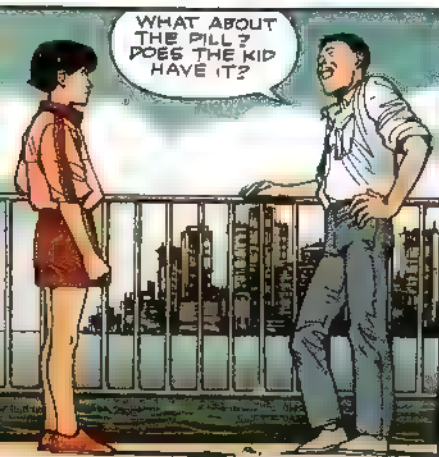
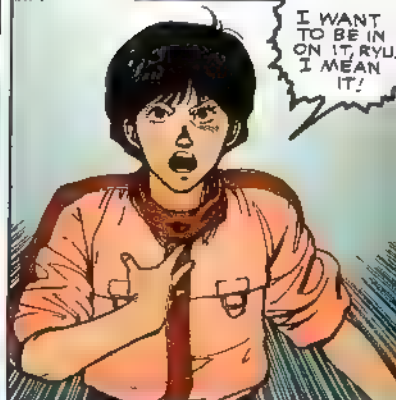
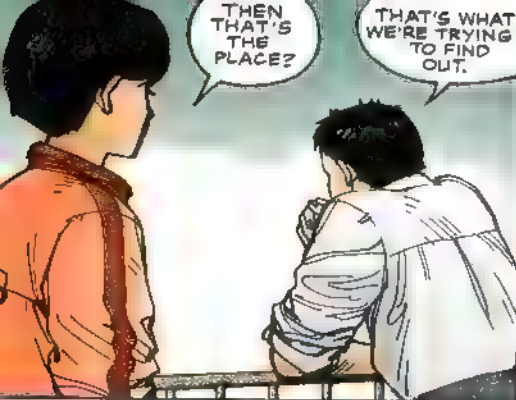
IT'S GOOD TO
SEE YOU! I'VE
BEEN SO
WORRIED!

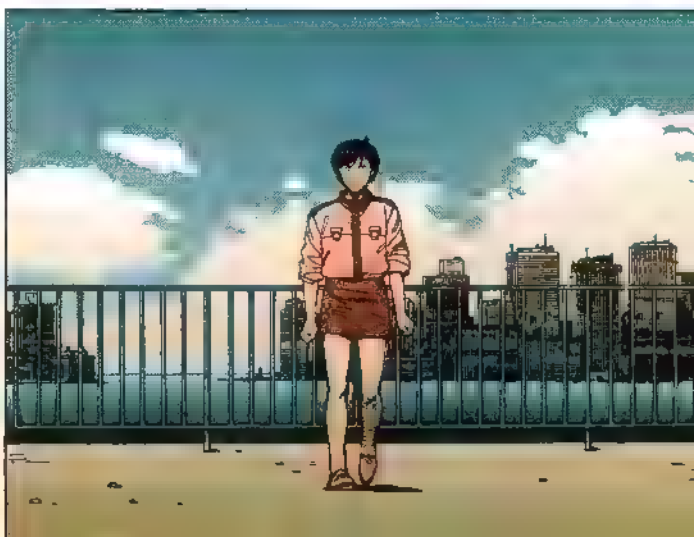
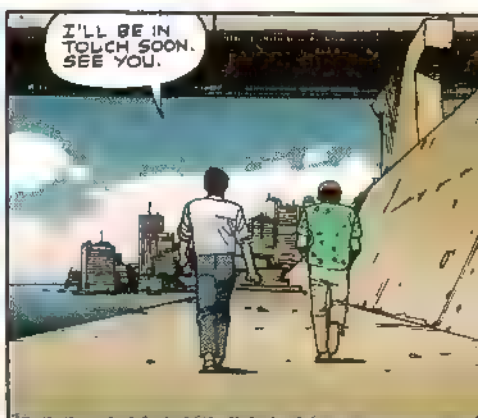
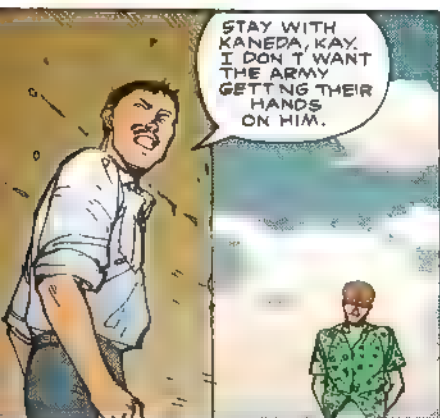
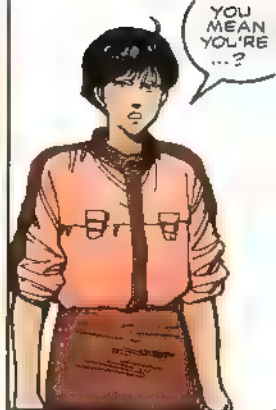


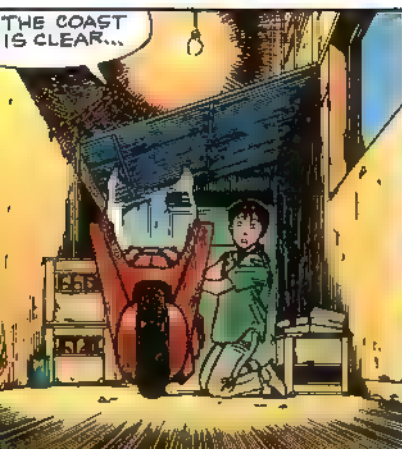
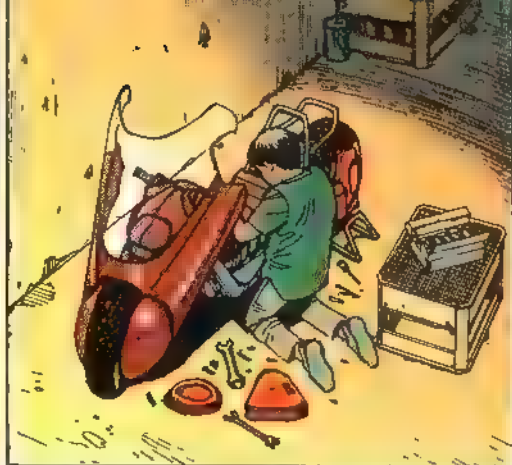
YOU'VE
BEEN WORRIED...?
WHERE HAVE
YOU BEEN
FOR THE PAST
WEEK?!

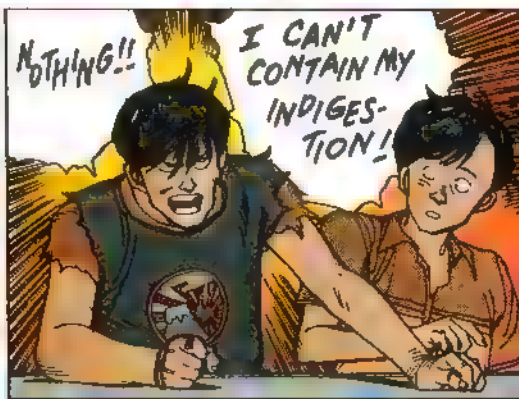
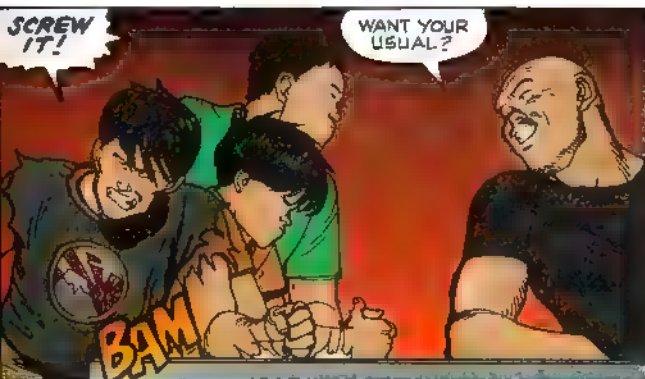
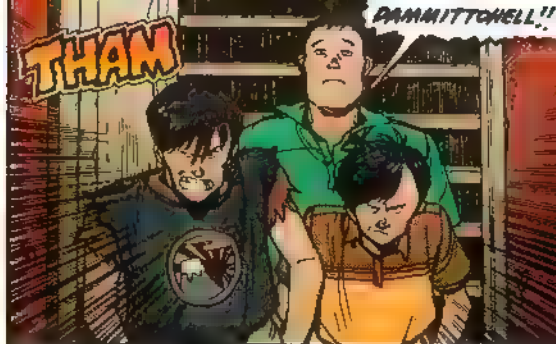


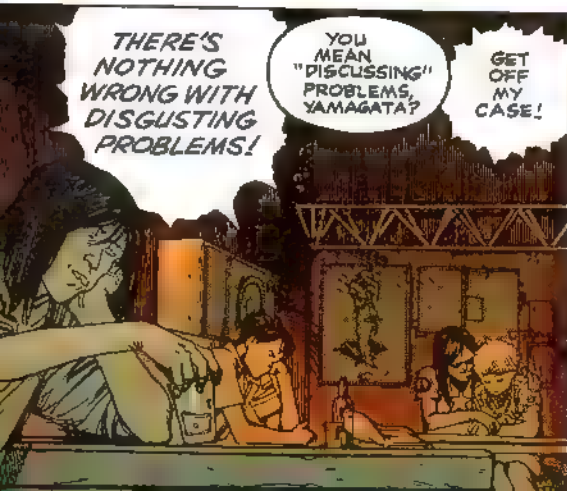
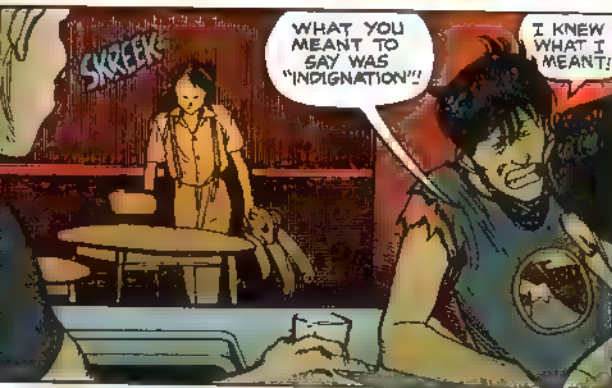
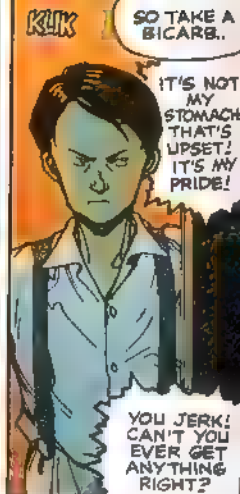
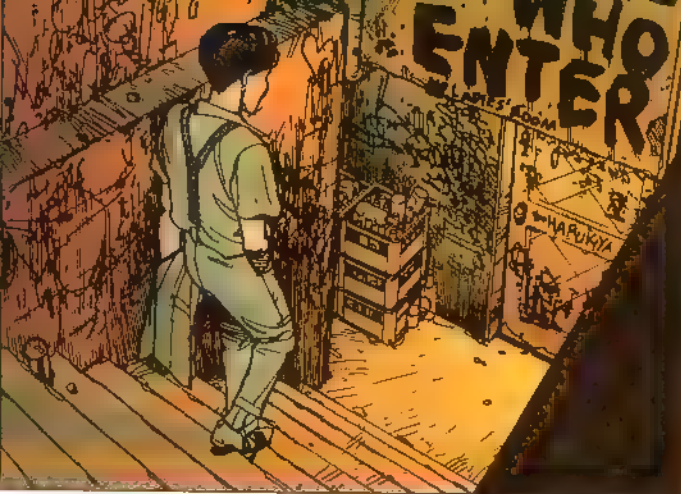


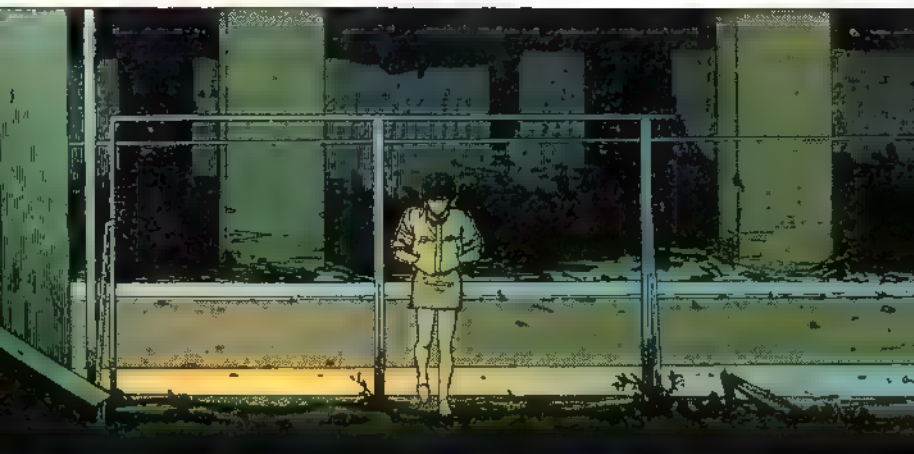
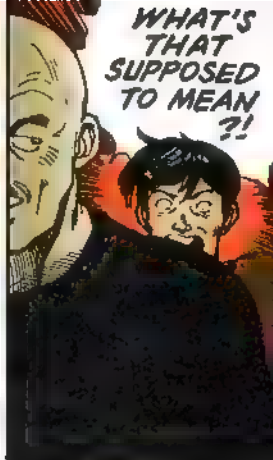


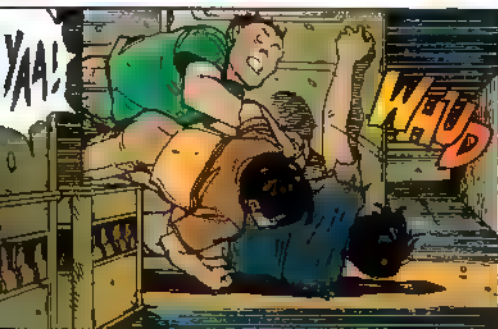
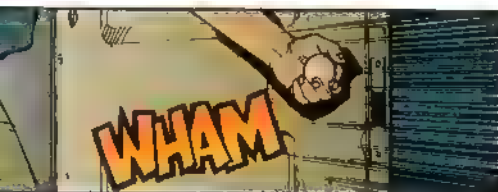
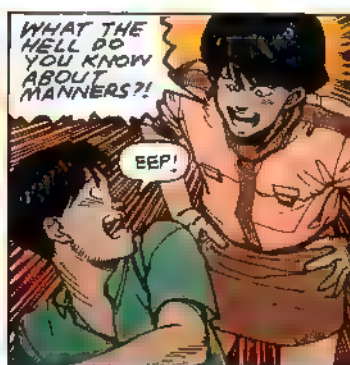
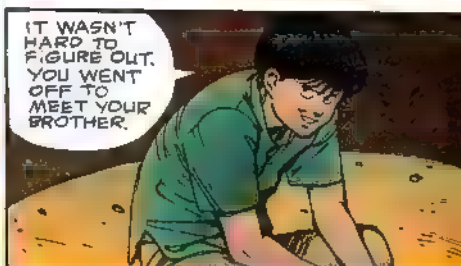
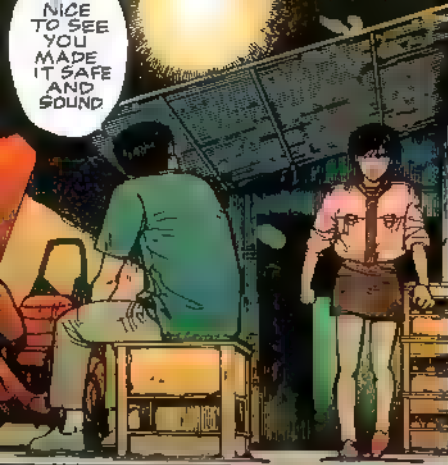


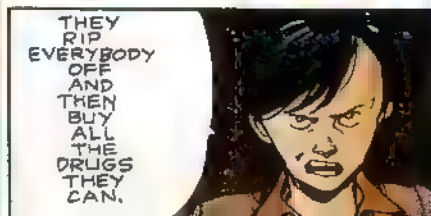
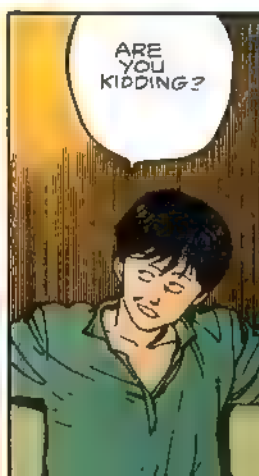
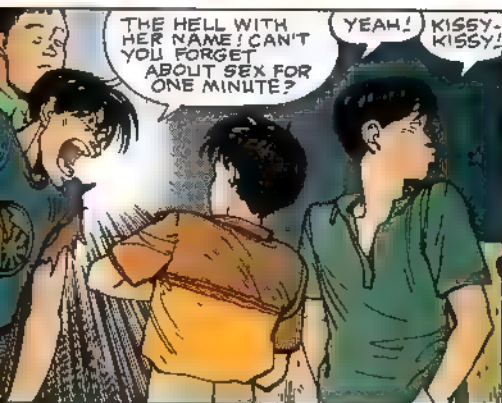
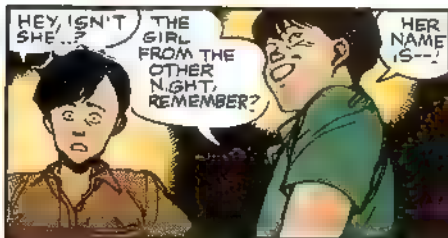


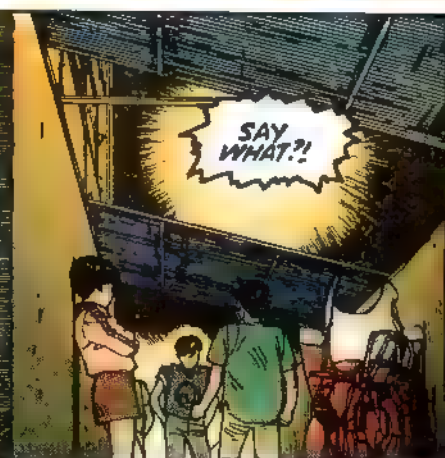
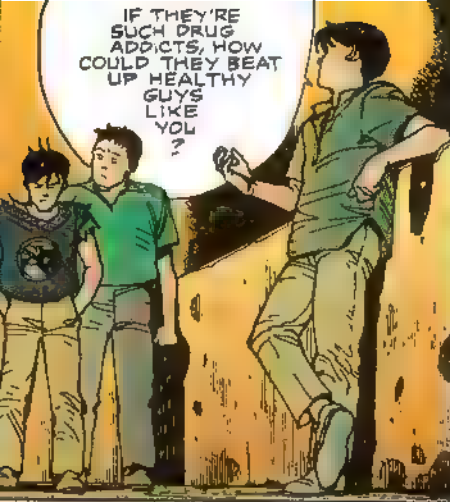














KANEDA!

BULLSHIT!

IT CAN'T
BE TRUE!

I DIDN'T WANT
TO BELIEVE IT
EITHER, BUT
I SAW WITH
MY OWN
EYES.

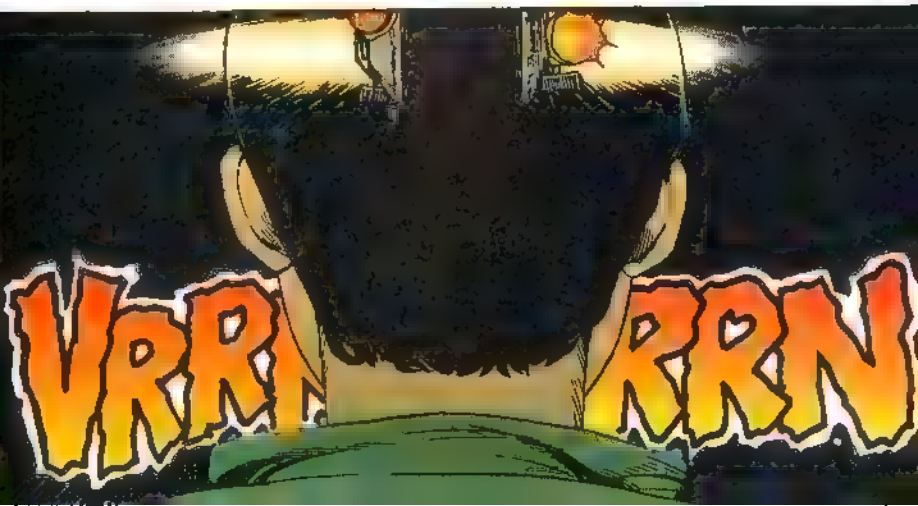
IT WAS
DEFINITELY
HIM, AND HE
WAS DEFINITELY
IN CHARGE!



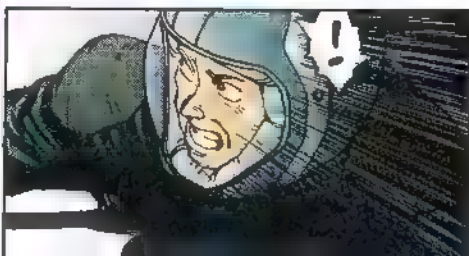
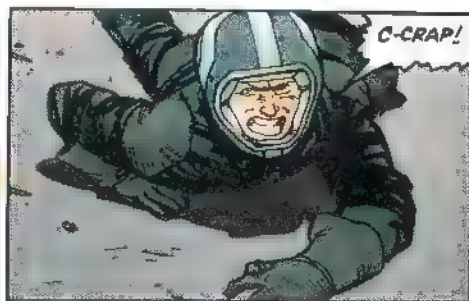
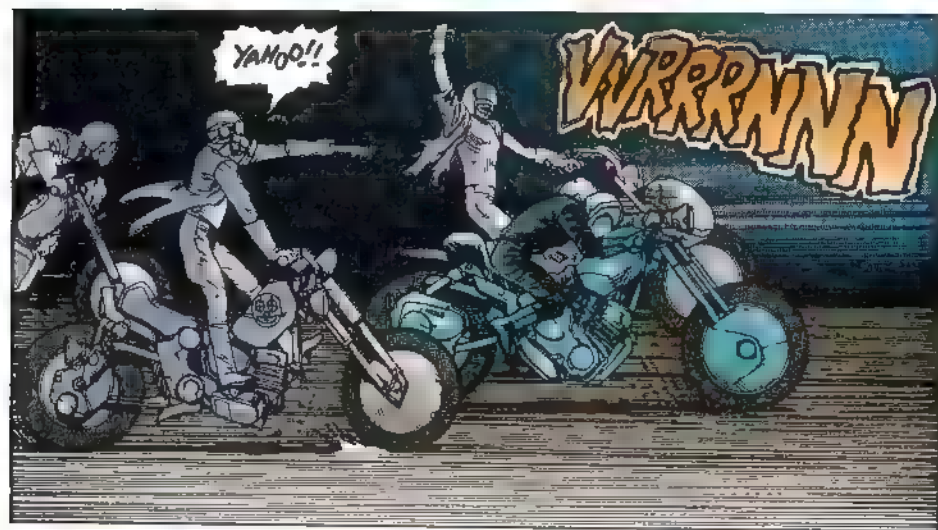
I DIDN'T
RECOGNIZE HIM
AT FIRST.
SOMETHING'S
HAPPENED
TO HIM.
HE'S
CHANGED.

BUT
THERE'S
NO
DOUBT
ABOUT
IT!

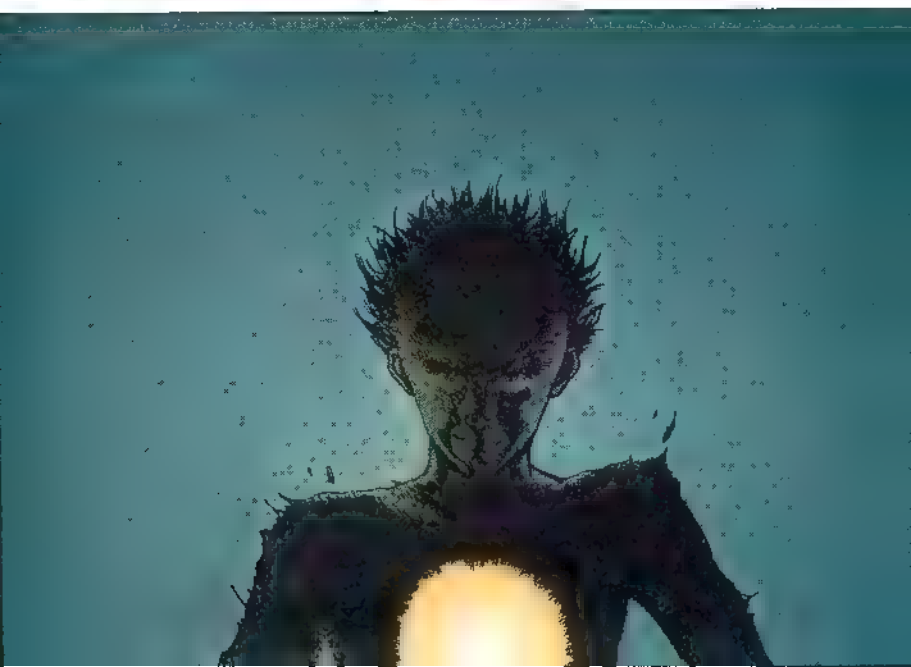
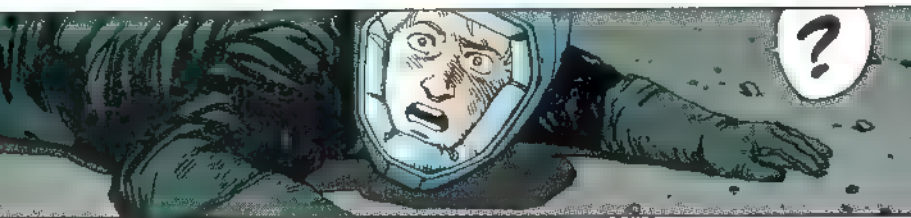
IT
WAS
HIM,
ALL
RIGHT!



VRRN



VRRRRN





WHADDAYA
WANNA
DO?



THMP!!

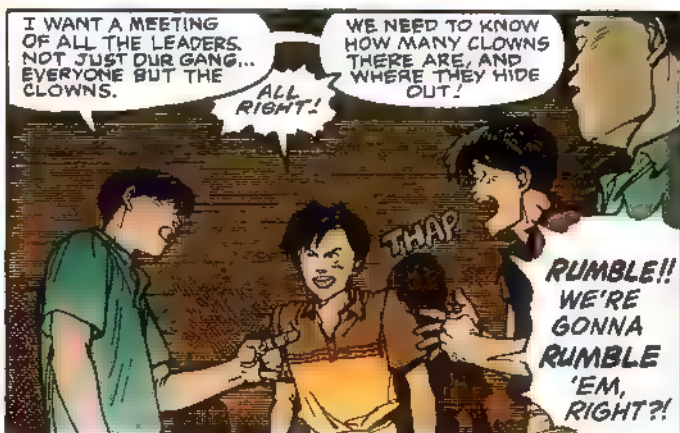


SNEK

I WANT A MEETING
OF ALL THE LEADERS.
NOT JUST OUR GANG...
EVERYONE BUT THE
CLOWNS.

ALL
RIGHT!

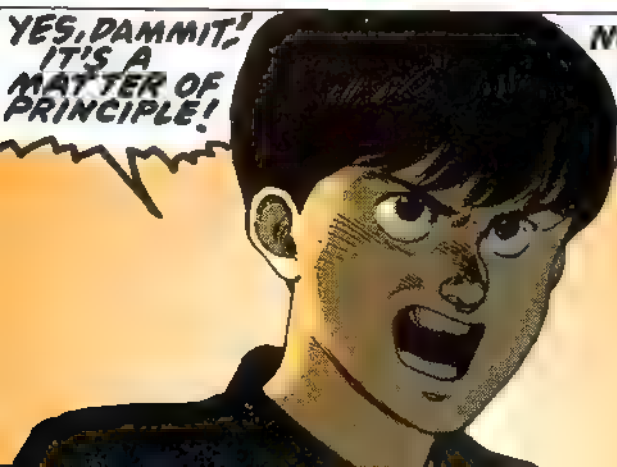
WE NEED TO KNOW
HOW MANY CLOWNS
THERE ARE, AND
WHERE THEY HIDE
OUT!



THAP

RUMBLE!!
WE'RE
GONNA
RUMBLE
'EM,
RIGHT?!

YES, DAMMIT!
IT'S A
MATTER OF
PRINCIPLE!



NO SELF-RESPECTING
BIKERS LET A
BUNCH OF
JUNKIES KICK
THEIR ASSES!!

SO WHERE
AND WHEN
DO WE
MEET?

RIGHT
HERE!
HARU-
KIYA,
FIVE
O'CLOCK
TOMOR-
ROW!

YOU
GOT
IT,
HERE
AT
FIVE!

THE
CLOWNS
ARE
DEAD
MEAT!

EVERY-
BODY
GOT
THAT
?!

YEAH!

HEE-
HEE-
HEE-
HEE!

HOW
ABOUT...

SO
WHERE
DO
WE
BEGIN?

I'LL TAKE
THE
SEVENTH
DISTRICT...
THE
CARBURE-
TOR
BOYS!

I CAN
TALK
TO MY
CONTACTS
IN
THE
WILD
COCK
AND
THE
PRETTY
BOMBERS.

REMEMBER,
TOMORROW
AT
FIVE!

DON'T
HURT
YOUR-
SELF!



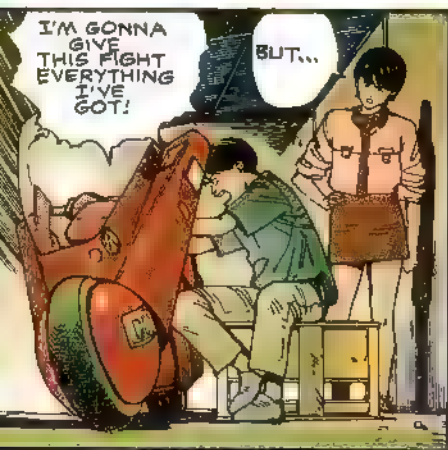
THEY CERTAINLY
THINK
A
LOT
OF
YOU.



WELL...I'M
A POPULAR
KIND OF
GUY.

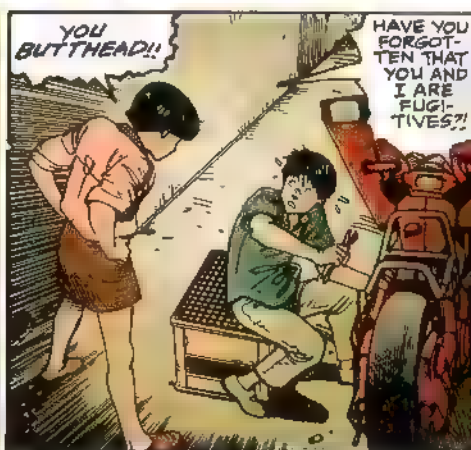


YOU'RE NOT
ACTUALLY
PLANNING
ON GOING
THROUGH
WITH IT,
ARE
YOU?



I'M GONNA
GIVE
THIS FIGHT
EVERYTHING
I'VE
GOT!

BUT...



YOU
BUTTHEAD!!

HAVE YOU
FORGOTTEN
THAT
YOU AND
I ARE
FUGITIVES?!!



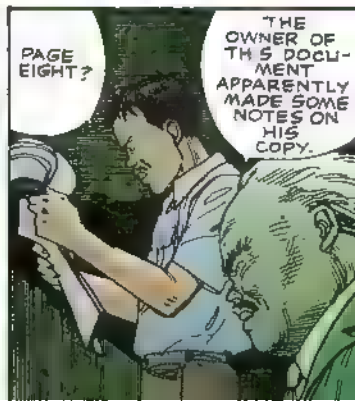
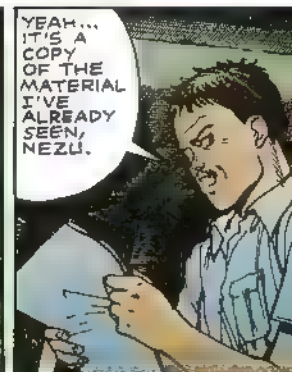
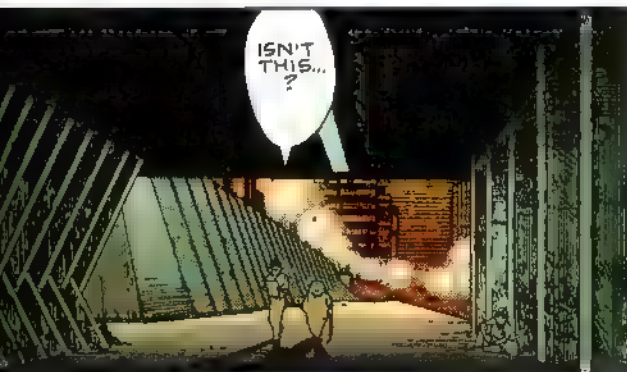
TAK
TAK
TAK

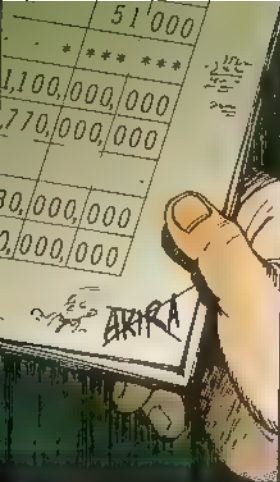


HMM...



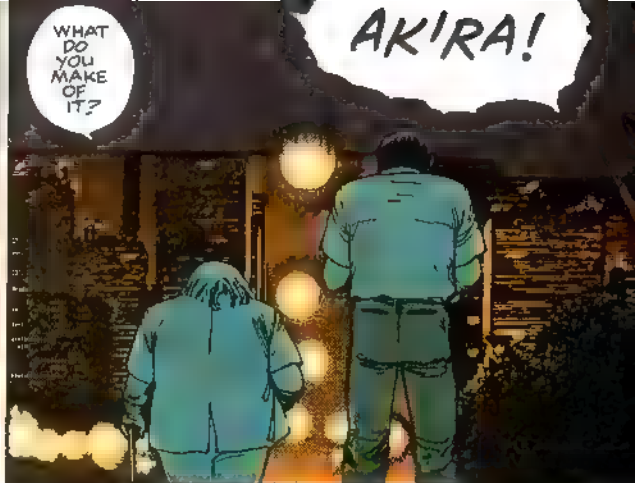
HEY!





WHAT
DO
YOU
MAKE
OF
IT?

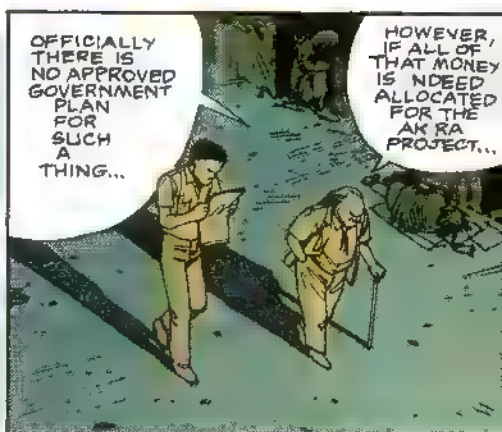
AKIRA!



NEZU...
YOU
THINK
THAT'S
WHAT
THIS
BIG
BUDGET IS
FOR?
AKIRA
?!

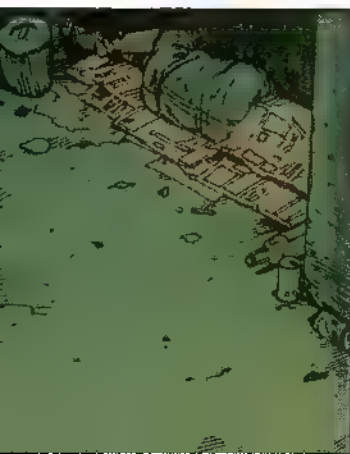


WE CAN'T
BE CERTAIN,
RYU.

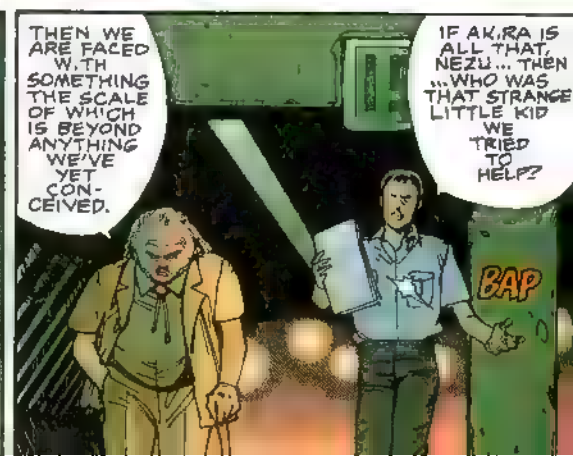


OFFICIALLY
THERE IS
NO APPROVED
GOVERNMENT
PLAN FOR
SUCH A
THING...

HOWEVER,
IF ALL OF
THAT MONEY
IS NEEDED
ALLOCATED
FOR THE
AKIRA
PROJECT...

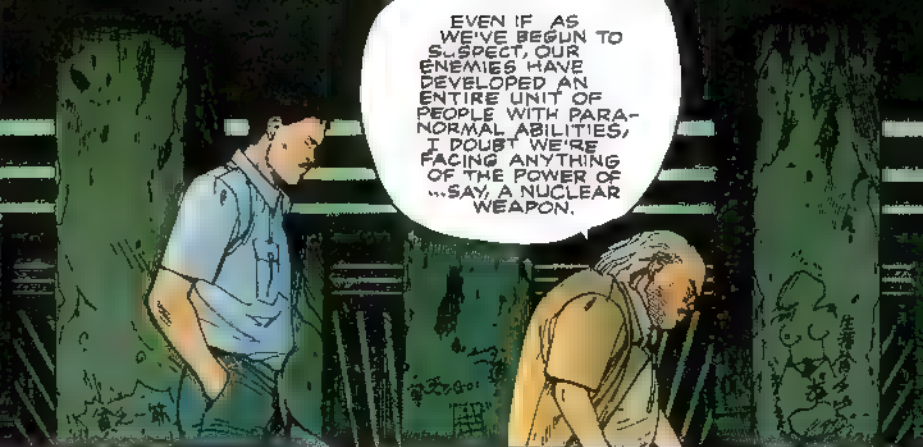


THEN WE
ARE FACED
WITH
SOMETHING
THE SCALE
OF WHICH
IS BEYOND
ANYTHING
WE'VE
YET CON-
CEIVED.



IF AKIRA IS
ALL THAT,
NEZU... THEN
...WHO WAS
THAT STRANGE
LITTLE KID
WE
TRIED
TO HELP?

BAP



EVEN IF AS
WE'VE BEGUN TO
SUSPECT, OUR
ENEMIES HAVE
DEVELOPED AN
ENTIRE UNIT OF
PEOPLE WITH PARA-
NORMAL ABILITIES,
I DOUBT WE'RE
FACING ANYTHING
OF THE POWER OF
...SAY, A NUCLEAR
WEAPON.



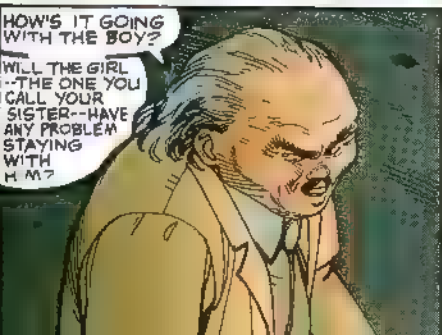
WITH THE
BUDGET
THEY'VE
GIVEN
THEMSELVES,
THEY COULD
DESTROY
THIS
PLANET A
HUNDRED
TIMES
OVER.



I AM
FULLY
AWARE OF
THAT, RYU.
HAVE YOU
LOCATED
THE
PILL AS
YET?



NO.



HOW'S IT GOING
WITH THE BOY?

WILL THE GIRL
--THE ONE YOU
CALL YOUR
SISTER--HAVE
ANY PROBLEM
STAYING
WITH
H.M?



LEAVE ALL
THAT TO
ME, NEZU.
I'VE
GOT A
BACKUP
STANDING
BY.

HAVEN'T
I SEEN
YOUR
FACE
SOME-
WHERE
BEFORE?



ME?
YOU
MUST BE
THINKING
OF
TWO
OTHER
GUYS.



WE WERE
HAVING
A LOT OF
TROUBLE
THE
NIGHT
I
SAW
YOU.



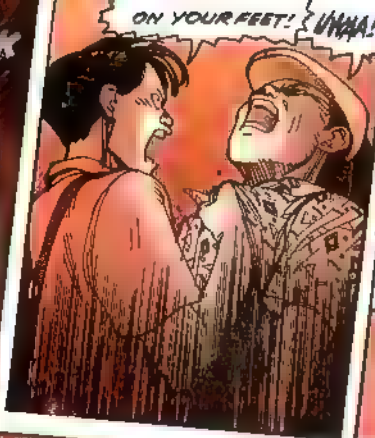
YOU
SON
OF
A--!





KRAK

KLUNK



ON YOUR FEET! UNHA!



UNGHIK



UP YOURS!



YARRR!



AAH...



PUFFS
PUFFS
PUFFS
PUFFS



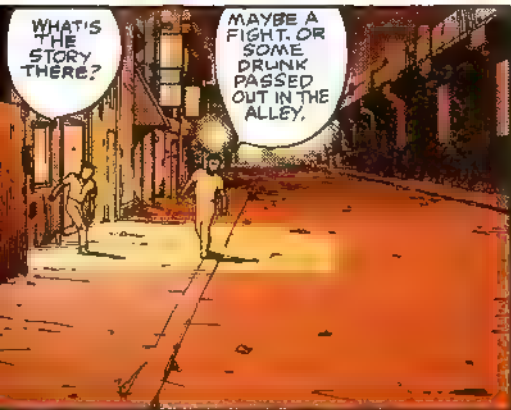
WHUD

WHUM



WHAT'S
THE
STORY
THERE?

MAYBE A
FIGHT. OR
SOME
DRUNK
PASSED
OUT IN THE
ALLEY.



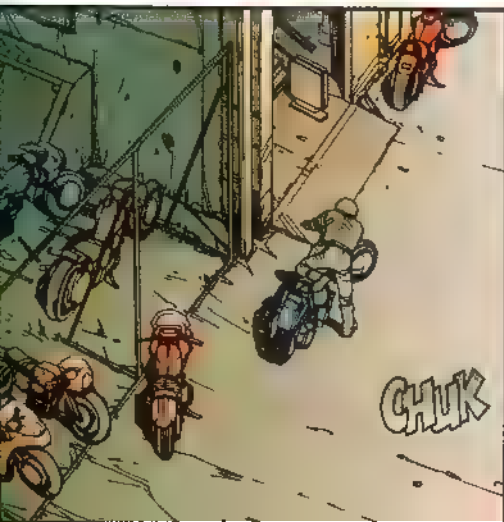
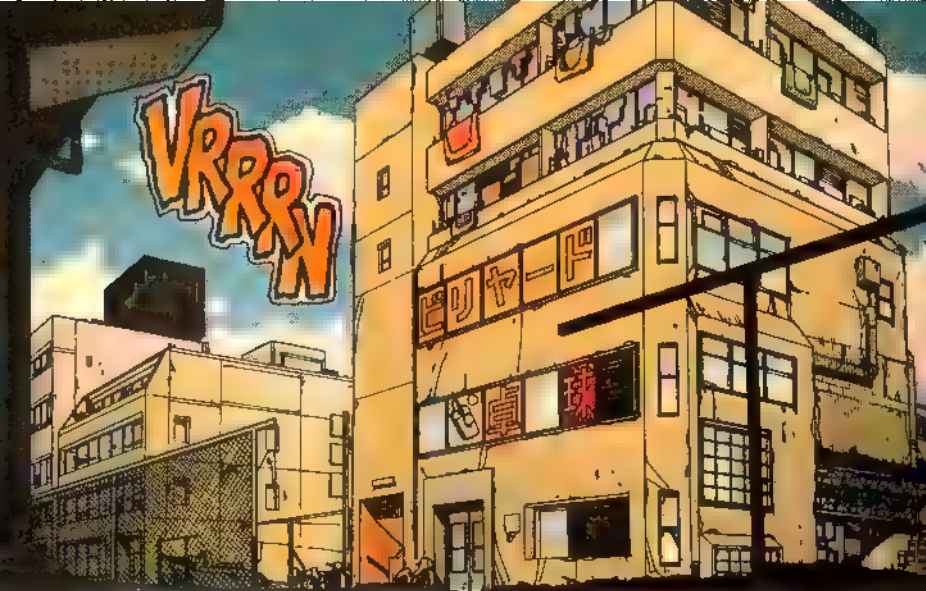
PUFF

PUFF



SOMEBODY...
COME...
QUICKLY..

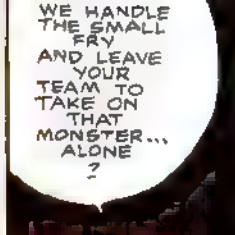








JUST LIKE THAT, YAMAGATA?



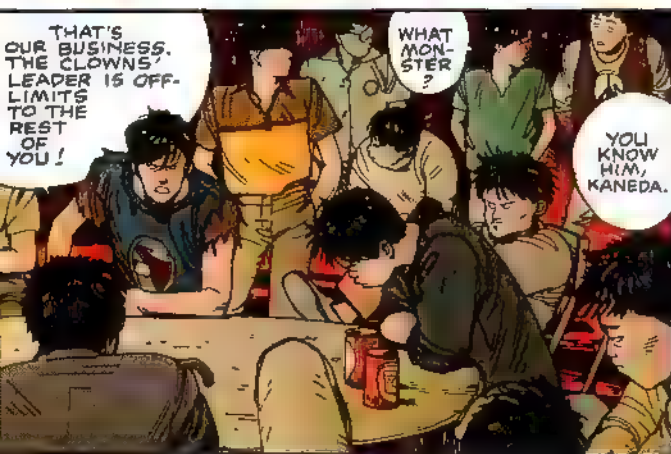
WE HANDLE THE SMALL FRY AND LEAVE YOUR TEAM TO TAKE ON THAT MONSTER... ALONE?



"MONSTER?"



YEAH! WE'LL HAVE THEM RIGHT WHERE WE WANT THEM.



THAT'S OUR BUSINESS. THE CLOWNS' LEADER IS OFF-LIMITS TO THE REST OF YOU!

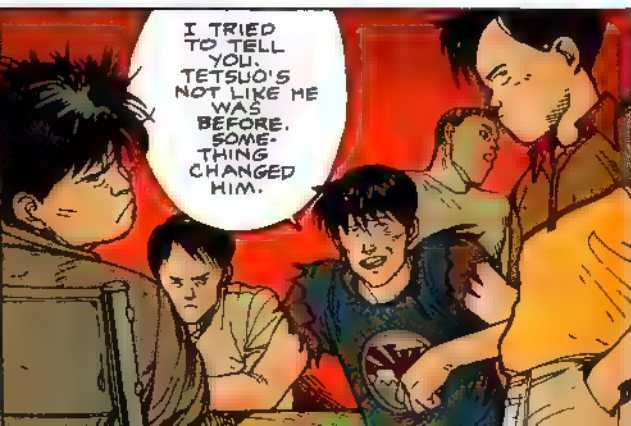
WHAT MONSTER?

YOU KNOW HIM, KANEDA.



HE USED TO BE PART OF YOUR GANG.

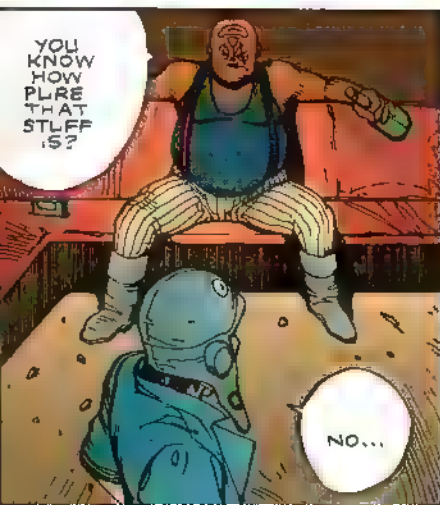
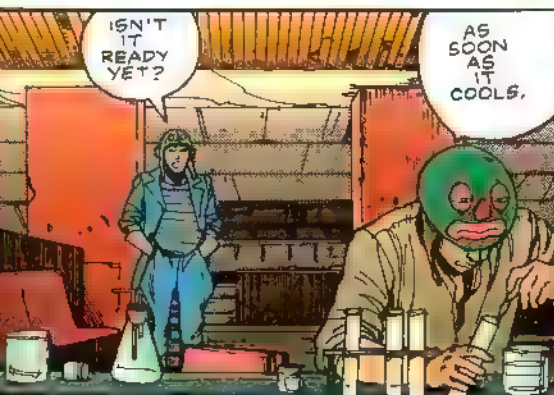
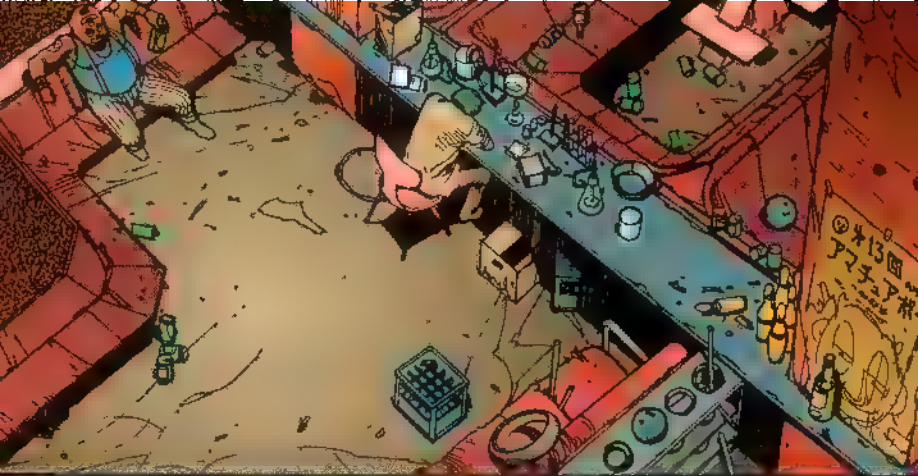
BUT WHY DID YOU SAY HE'S A MONSTER?

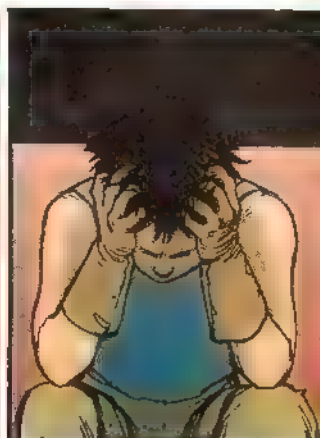
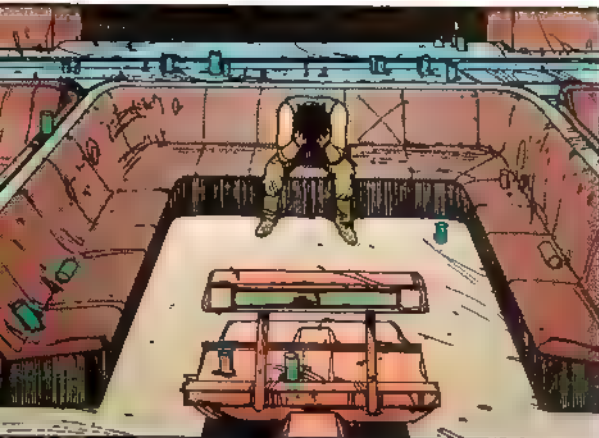


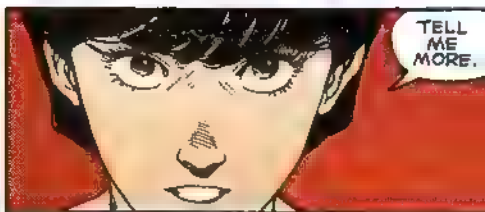
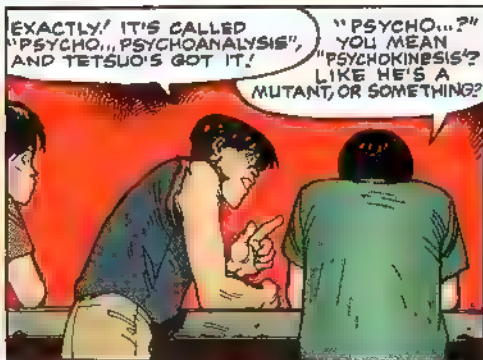
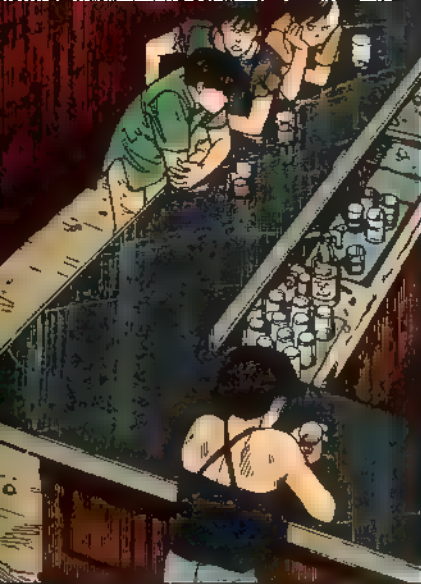
I TRIED TO TELL YOU. TETSUO'S NOT LIKE HE WAS BEFORE. SOMETHING CHANGED HIM.

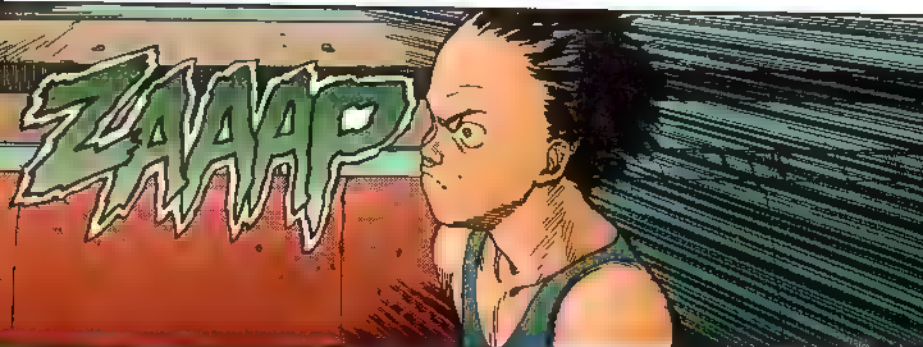


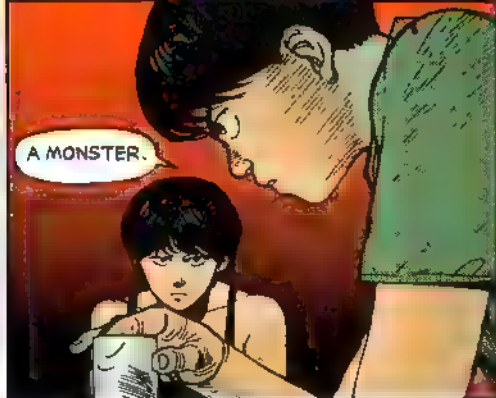
WHATEVER HE IS, HE'S ALL YOURS. HAVE FUN WHEN HE RIPS YOUR HEADS OPEN.

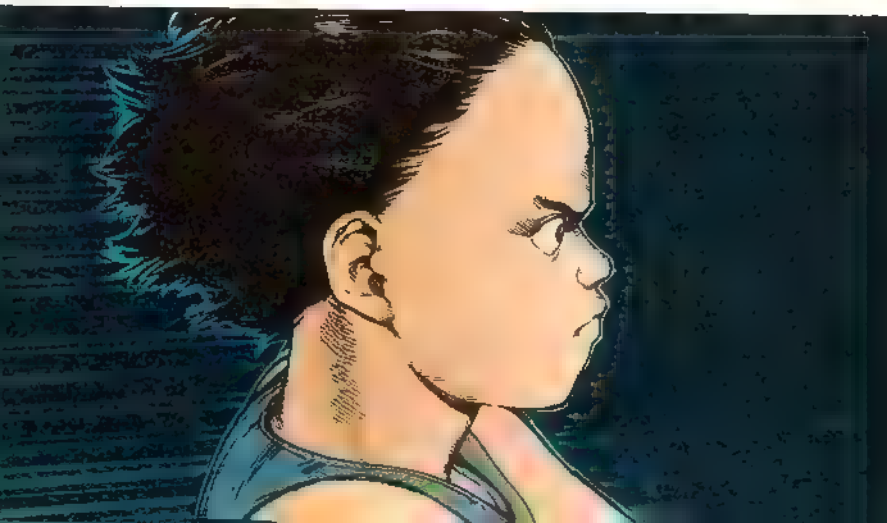
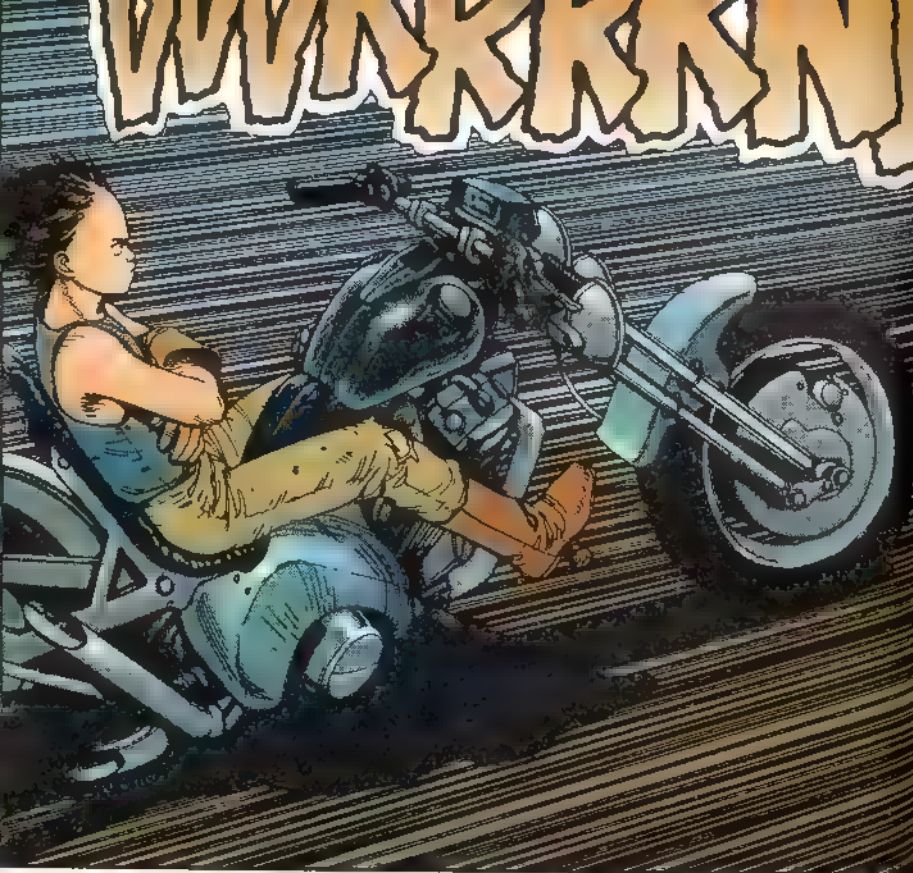


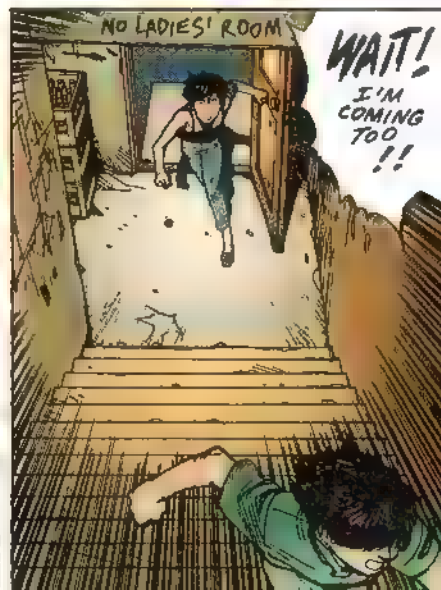
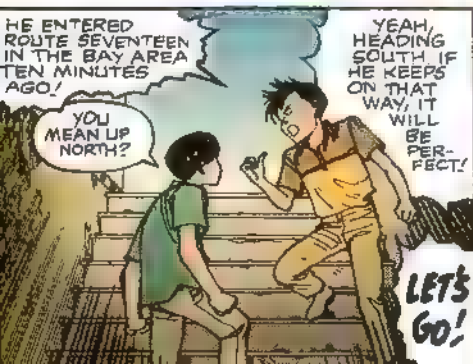












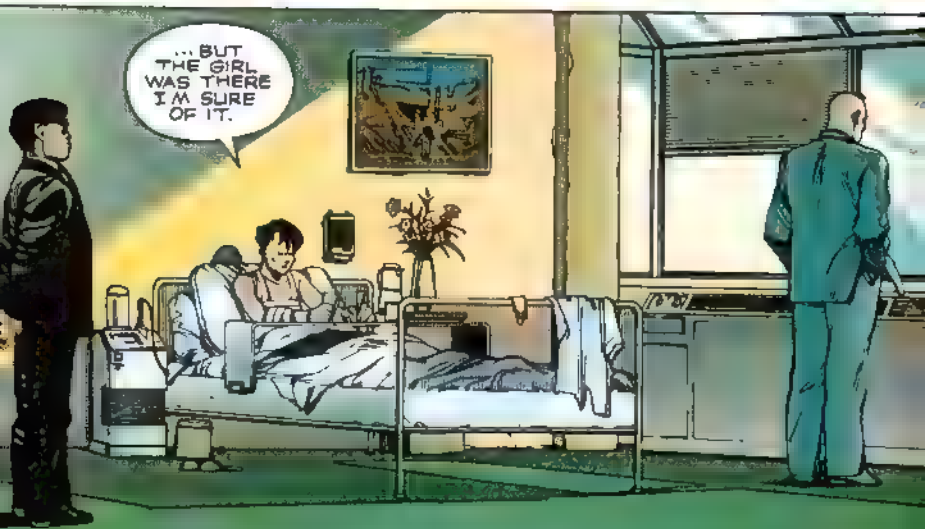


... A BAR CALLED HARUKIYA, RIGHT ON THE BORDER BETWEEN THE SEVENTEENTH AND EIGHTEENTH DISTRICTS.

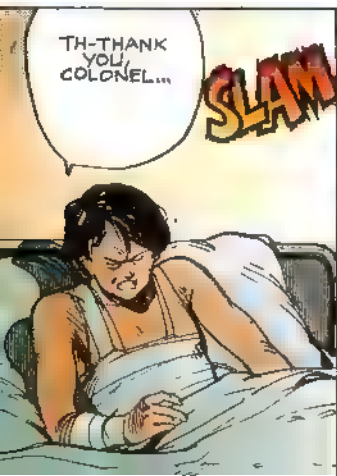
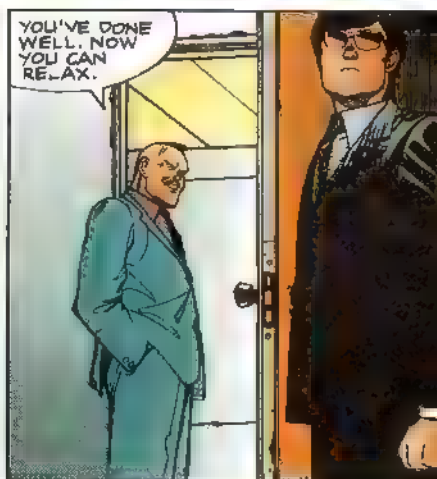
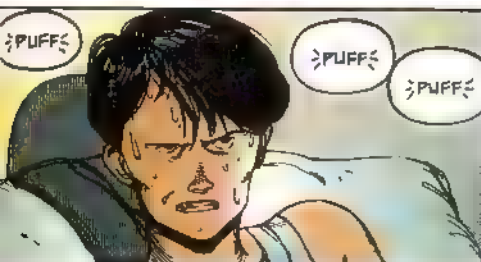
IT'S ALONGSIDE THE EXPRESSWAY.

AUTHORIZED PERSONNEL ONLY
FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT
THE FIFTH FLOOR ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE

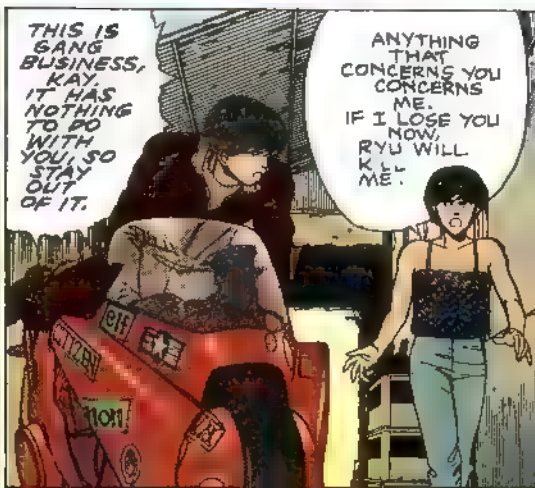
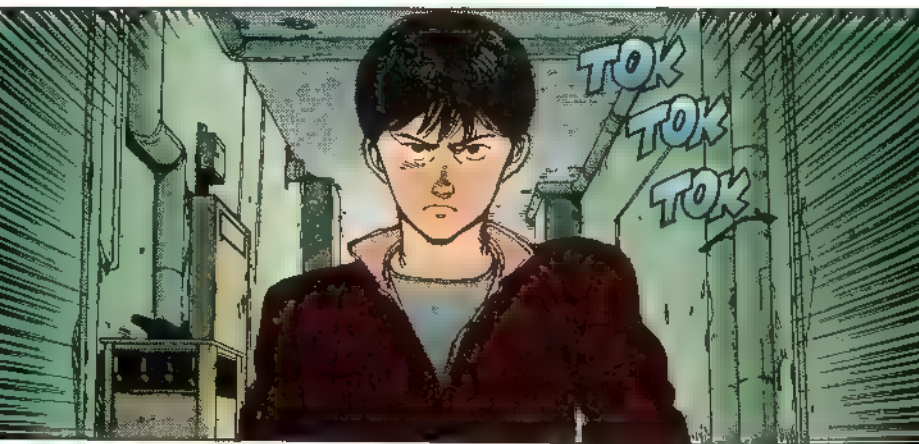
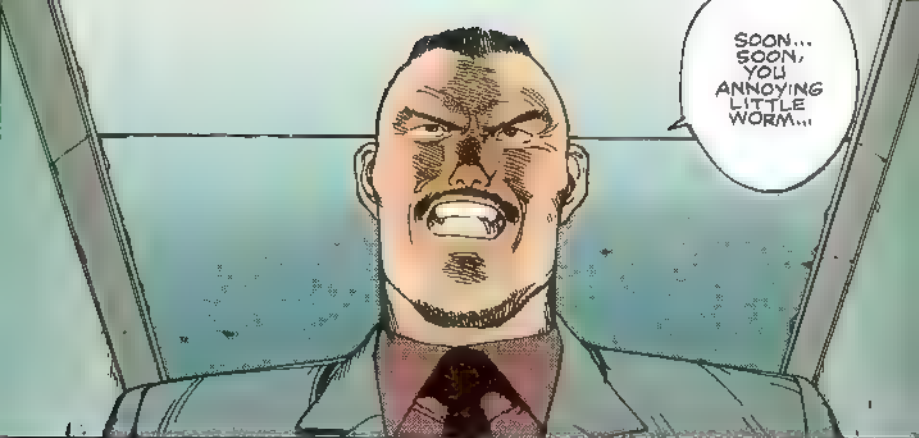
NO, THERE WAS NO SIGN OF THE MAN WITH THE BEARD...



... BUT THE GIRL WAS THERE I'M SURE OF IT.



YES,
SIR!



COME ON IN
THERE! LET'S
MOVE IT!

VRN VRN

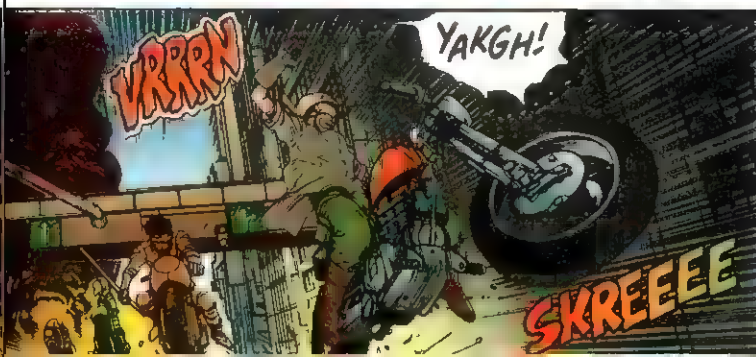
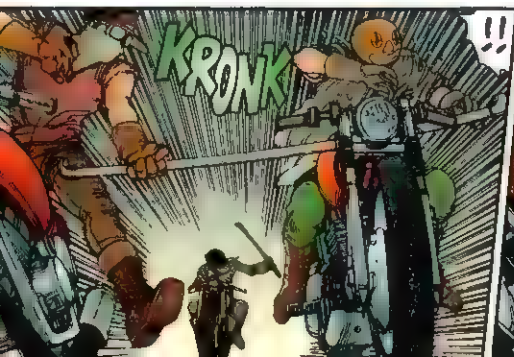
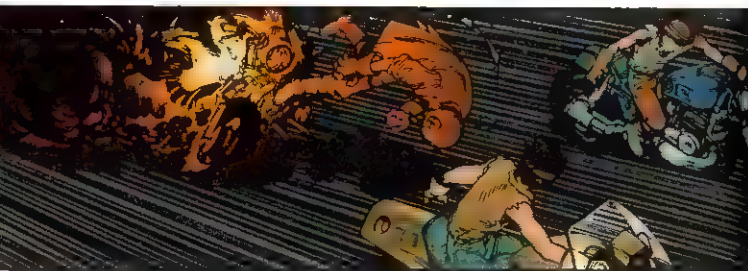
HEY, LEND
IT TO ME,
WOULD
YOU?

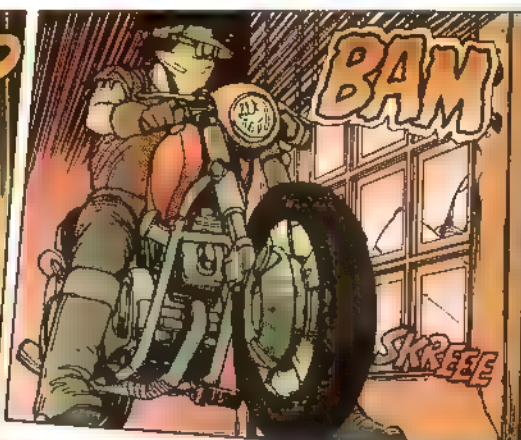
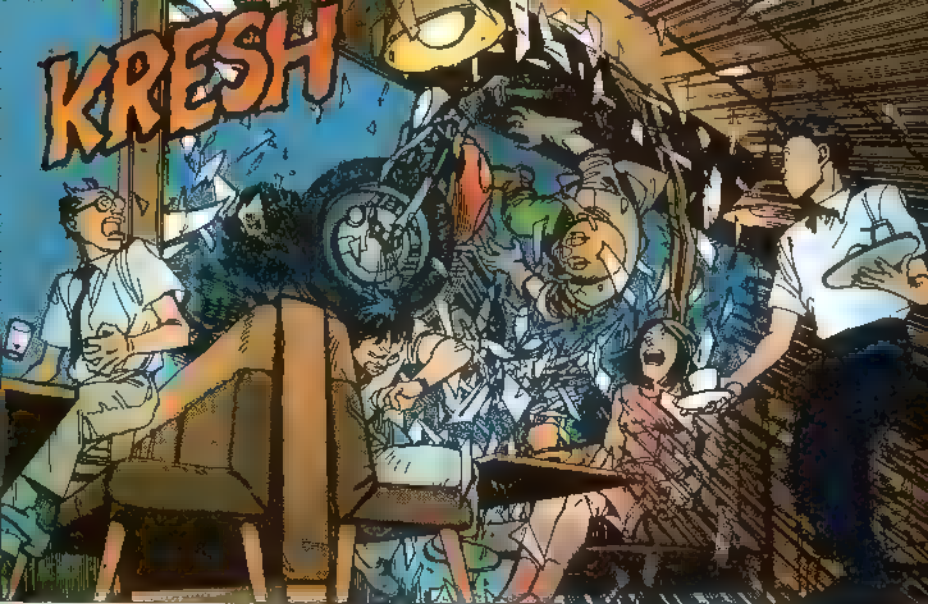
WHAT ARE
YOU TALKING
ABOUT?

YOU KNOW,
I THINK THERE
WAS STILL ONE
BULLET LEFT..

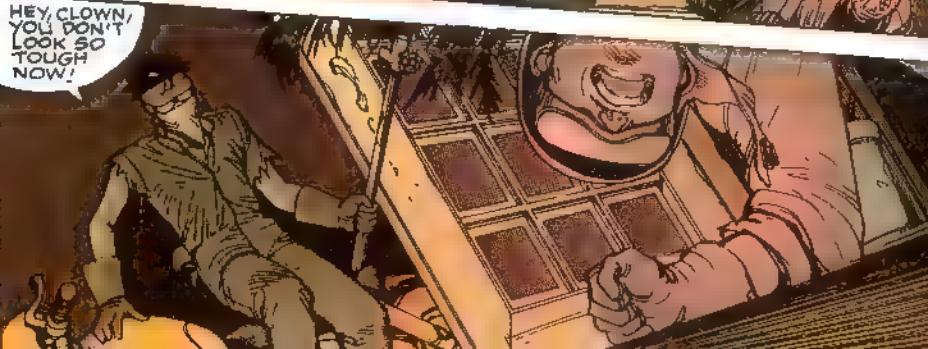
BANG!!

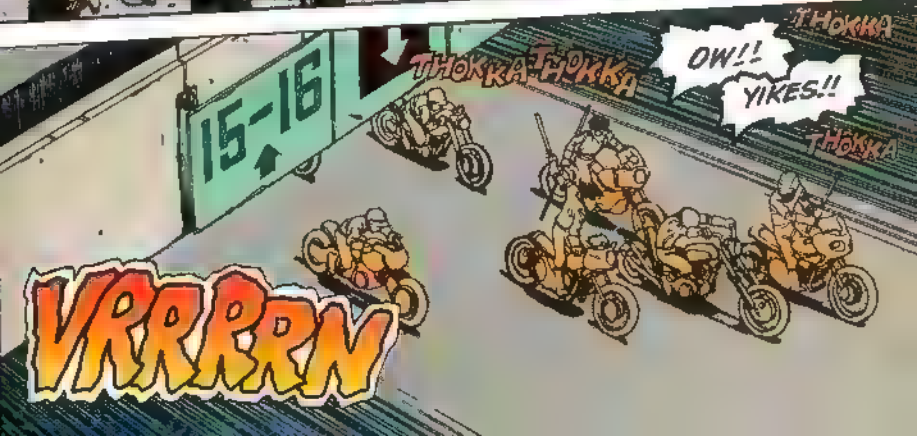
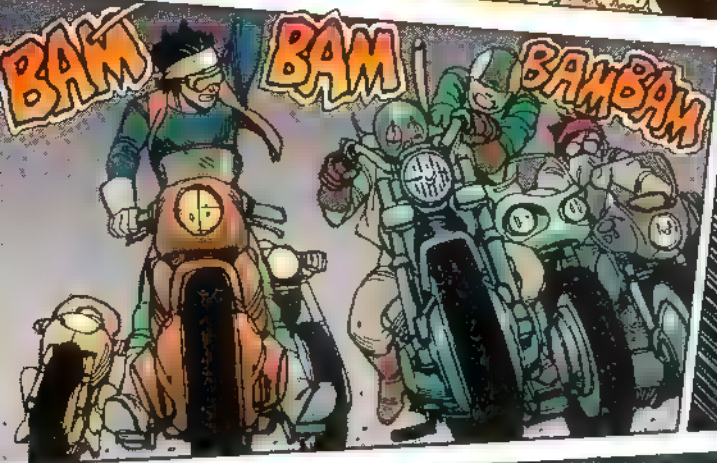
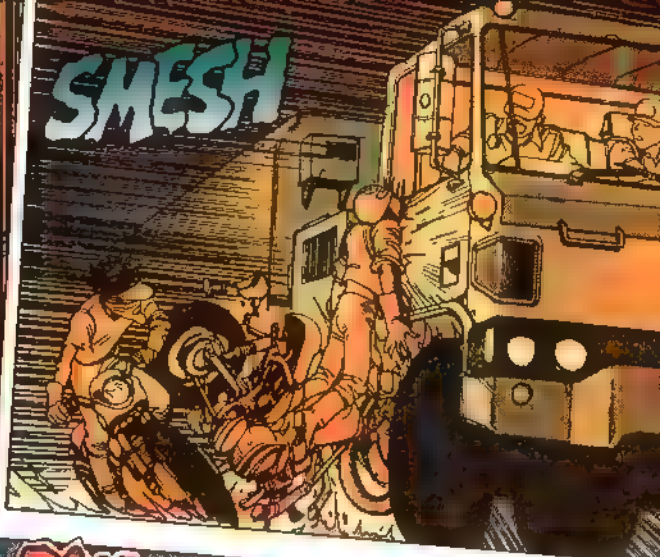
VRRRN

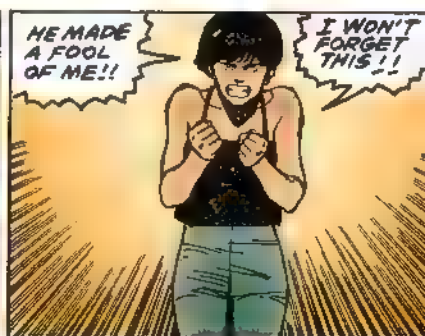
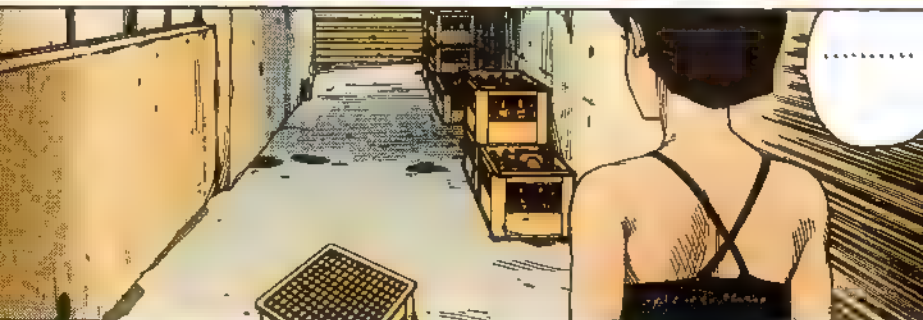




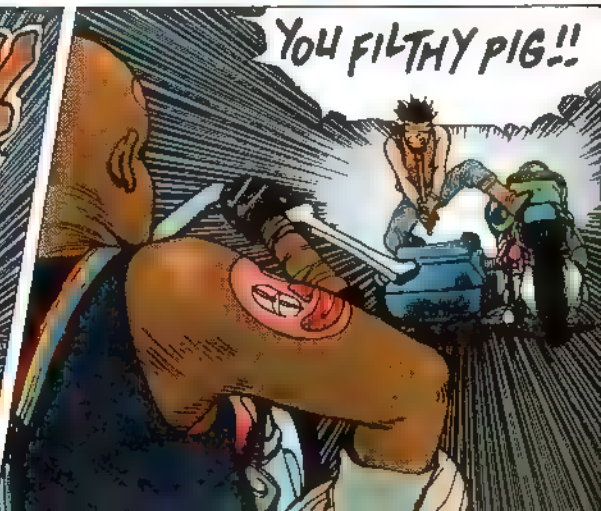
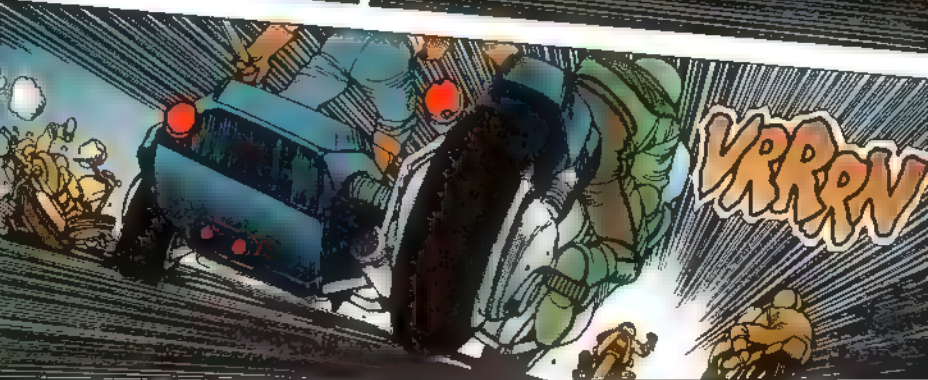
HEY, CLOWN,
YOU DON'T
LOOK SO
TOUGH
NOW!

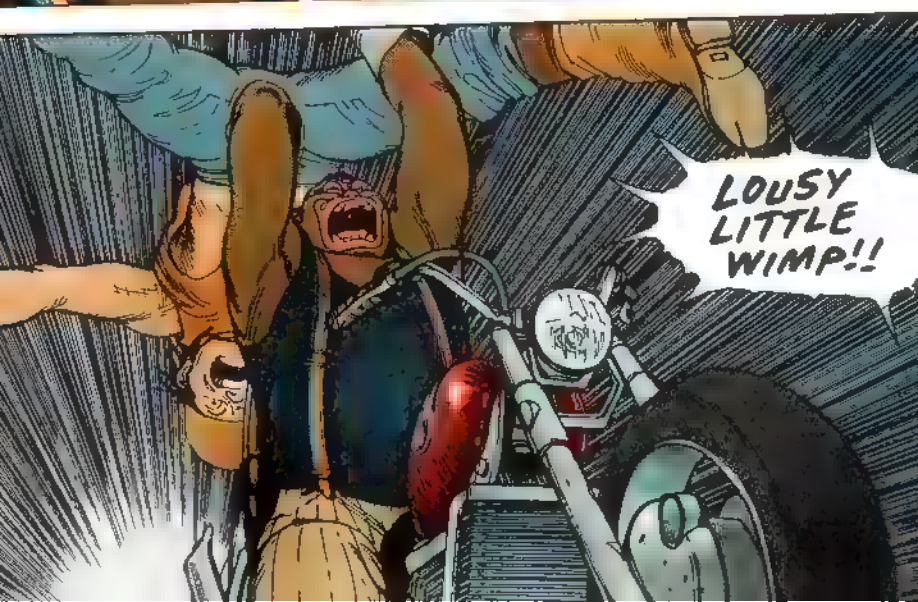
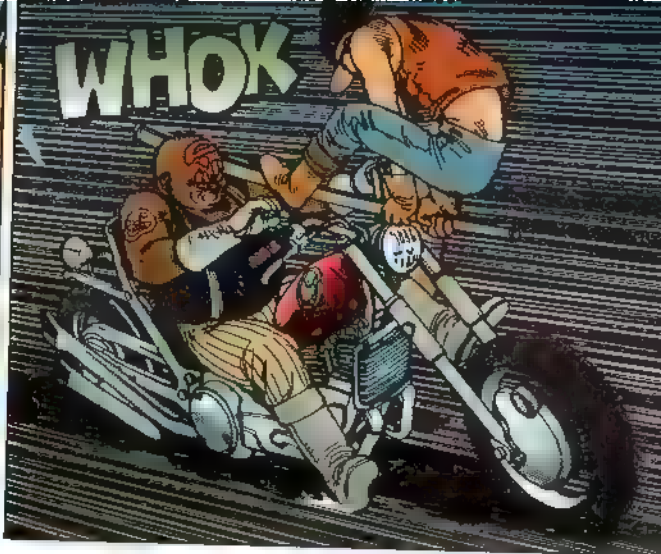








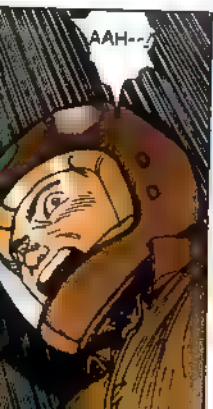
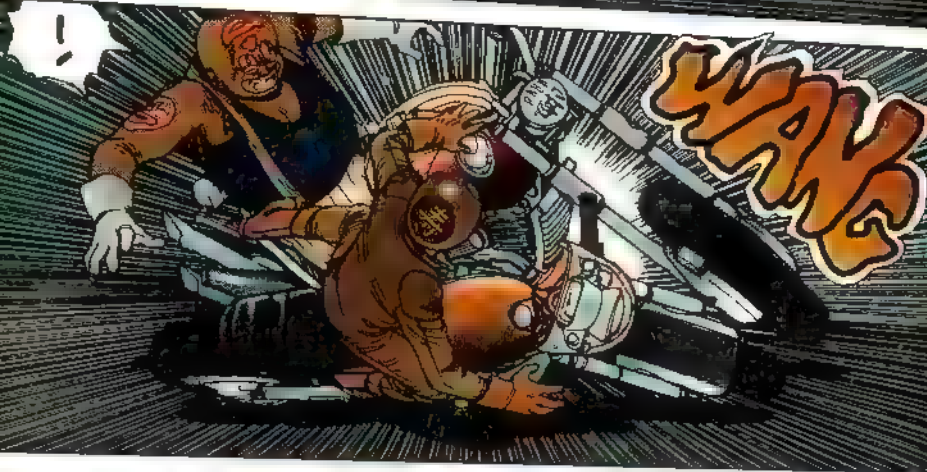




VRRRRN



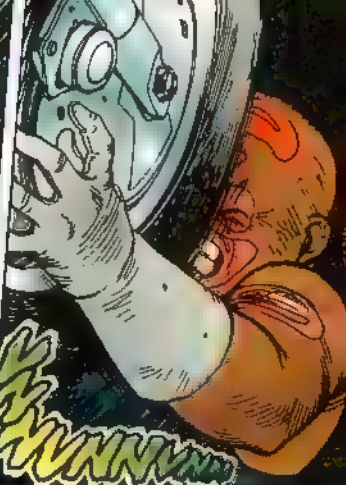
VNNVNNVNNVNN





WHOO!

!



WUNNUNN



OKAY, NOW!!

YOU GOT IT!!

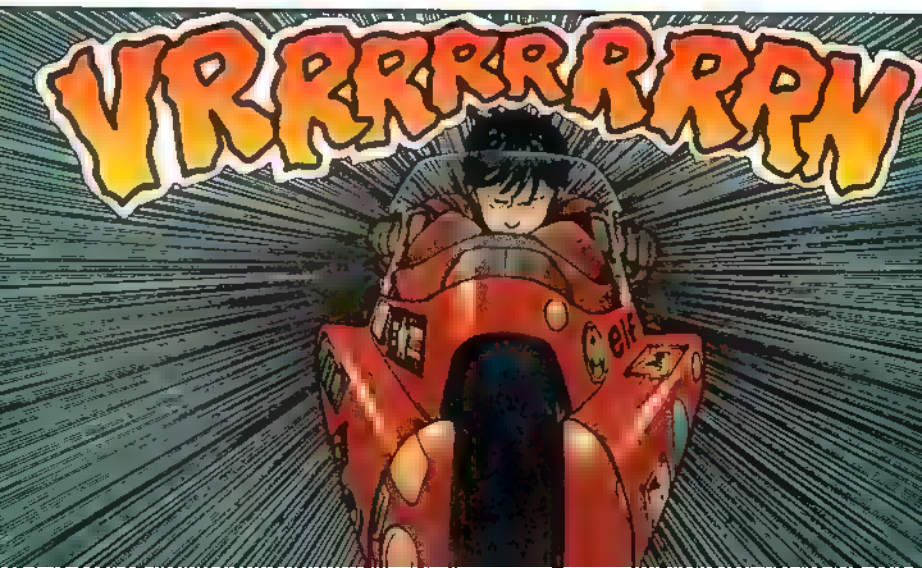
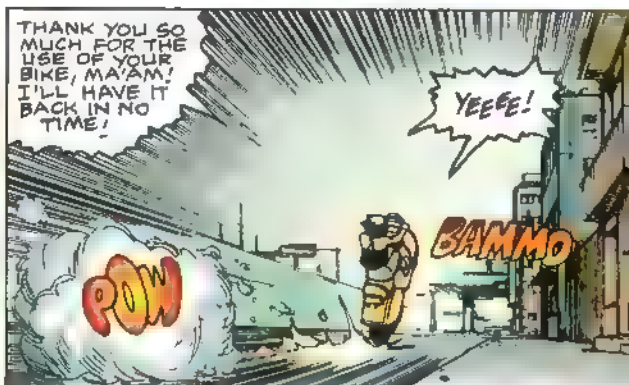
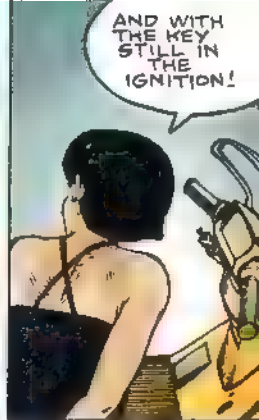
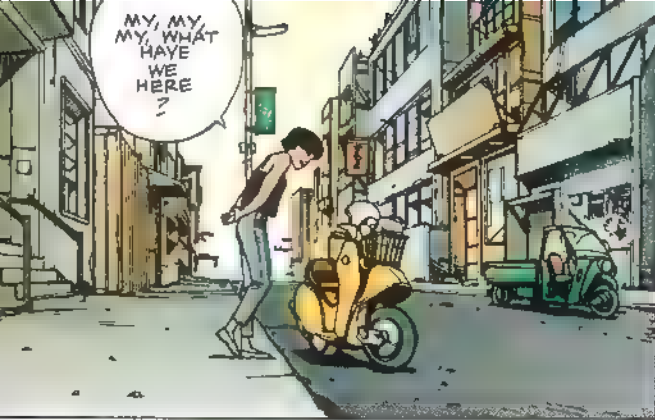
NO PRISONERS!

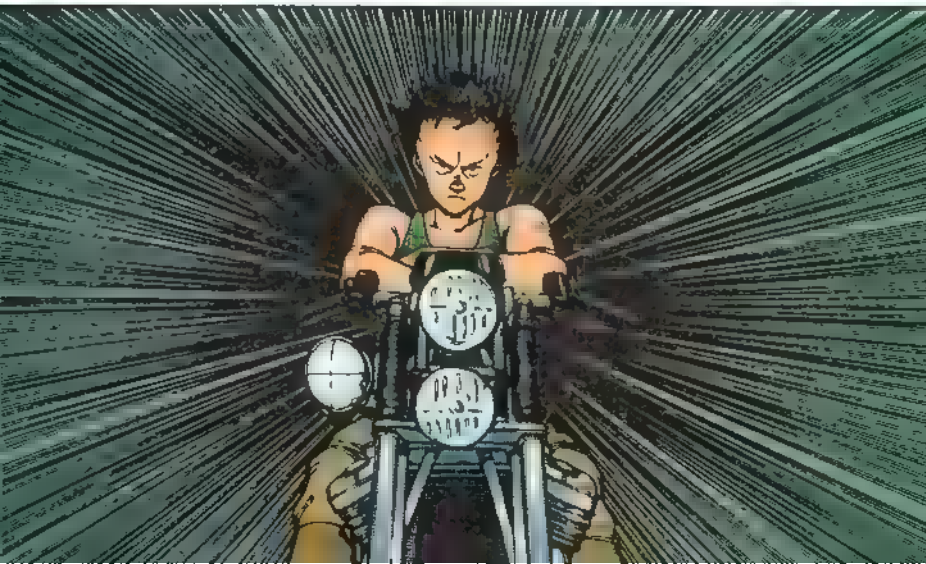


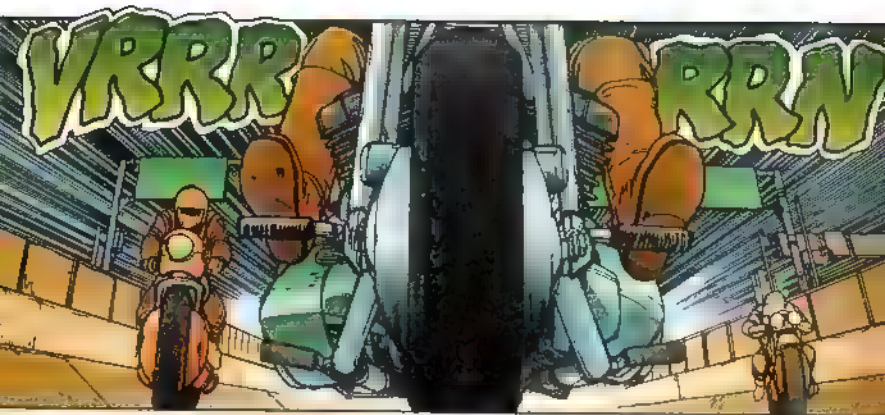
A COUPLE OF 'EM
DUCKED DOWN
THAT ALLEY!

I'M
ON 'EM!

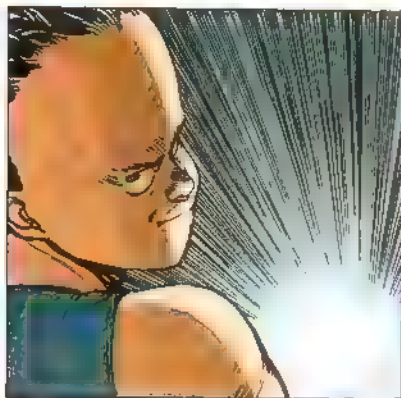
GET
THEM!!







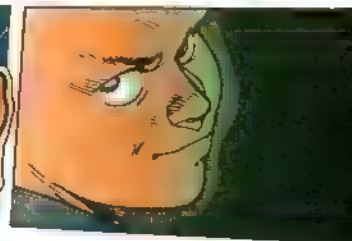
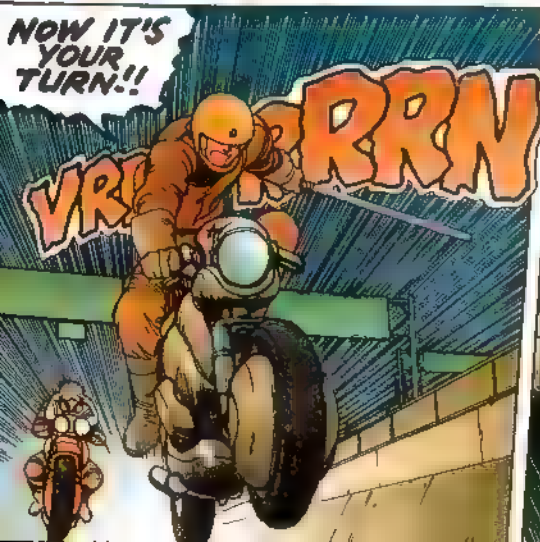
**HOLD IT RIGHT
THERE, YOU
SON-~~LIV~~ABITCH!**

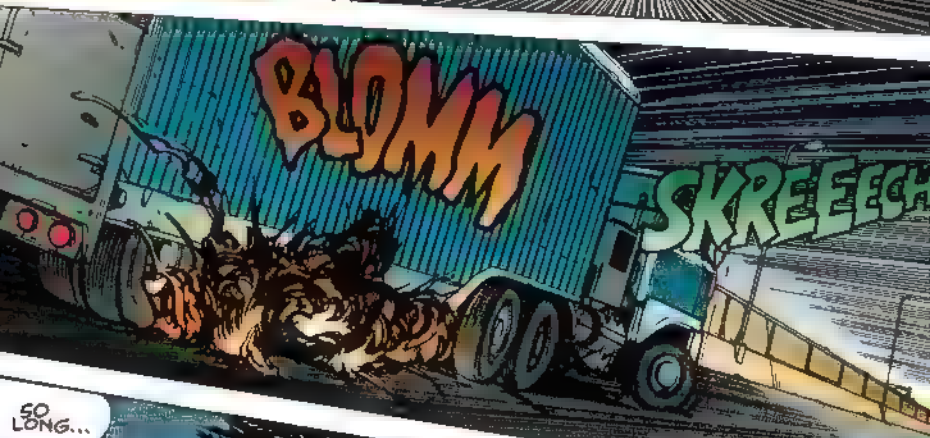
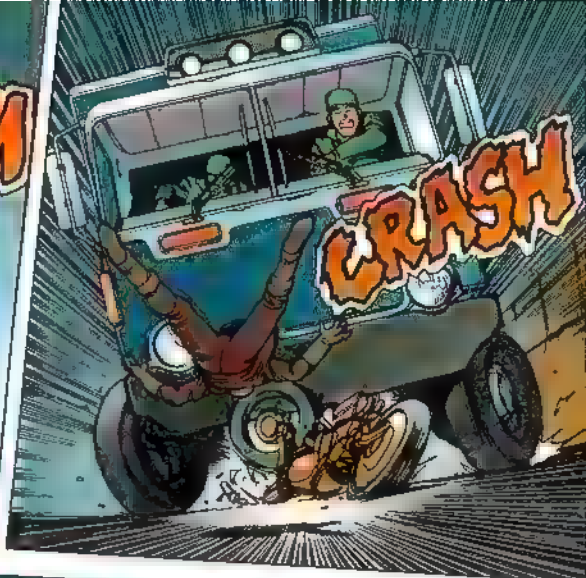
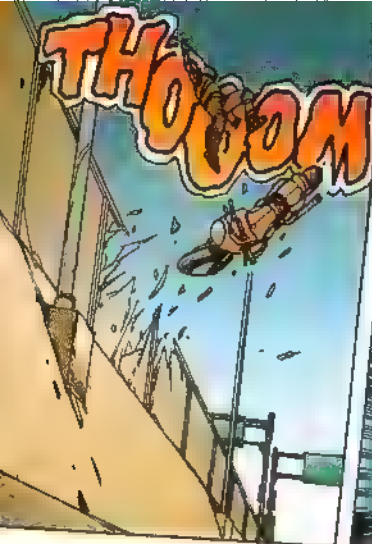


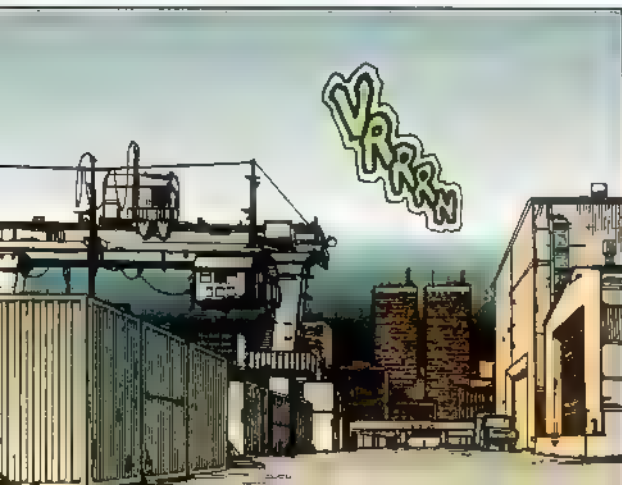
**LAST WEEK YOU
KILLED MY BEST
FRIEND!!**



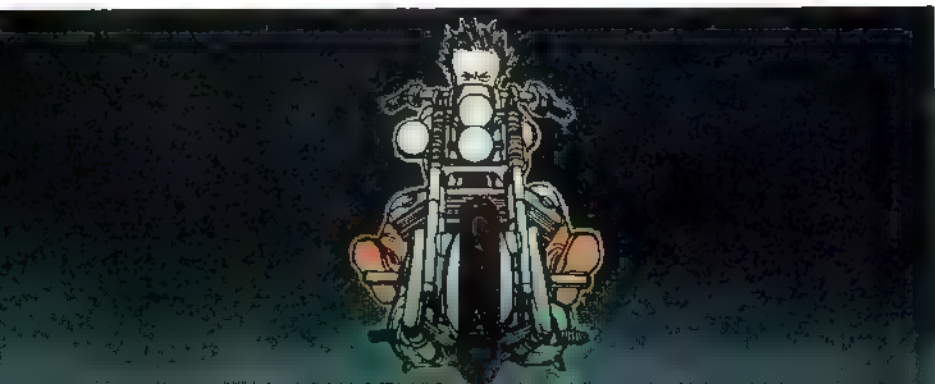
**NOW IT'S
YOUR
TURN!!**



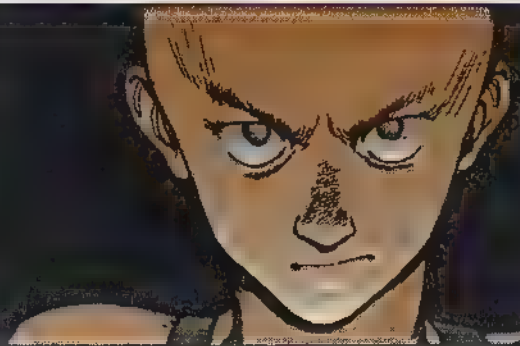
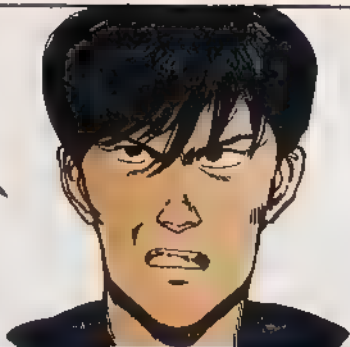




TWEE-WHEEET!!



YOU
WENT
TOO
FAR...



DIDN'T YOU,
TETSUO?!

VERRRRRRRRN



NEXT ISSUE: MY FRIEND, MY ENEMY



AKIRA

MORE SCENES FROM THE ANIMATED FILM

In issue five of our edition of *Akira* we showed material from the animated movie which had its premiere in Tokyo on July 16, 1988. On this and the page that follows, we're happy to provide a further look at the film (the number one attraction in its opening week) which was storyboarded, written and directed by the creator of *Akira*, Katsuhiro Otomo.

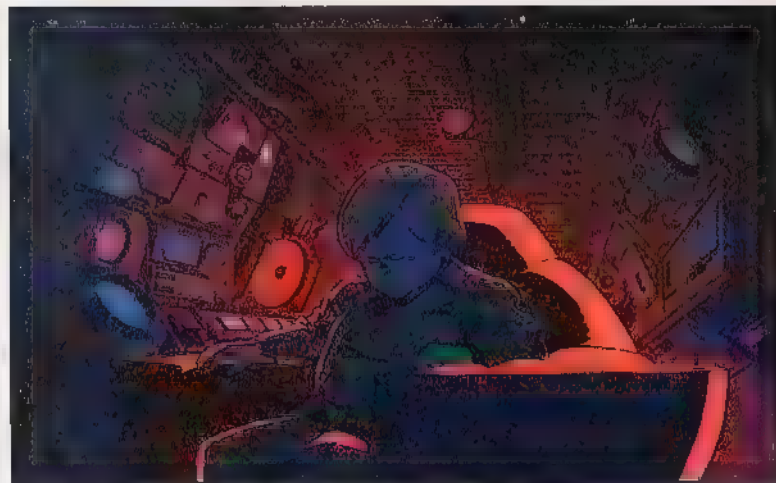
Above. Tetsuo fights a member of the Clown gang. Note that Otomo has the motorcycles shown with colored tires, this is a development now believed being considered for the future by manufacturers.
Below. one of the character designs for Kaneda.





Tatsuo riding on a newly designed motorcycle.

Masaru, Number 27, inside the government helicopter searching for his fellow mutant, Takashi, Number 26.



KATSUHIRO OTOMO

writer, illustrator

YASUMITSU SUETAKE

chief assistant to Mr. Otomo

MAKOTO SHIOSAKI

SATOSHI TAKABATAKE

assistants to Mr. Otomo

HIROSHI HIRATA

designer, AKIRA calligraph

AKIRA SAITO

designer, Kodansha edition

Kodansha Ltd

YOKO UMEZAWA

with **LINDA M. YORK**

translation

KOICHI YURI

editor, Kodansha edition

NORIYUKI OKAZAKI

YUKA ANDO

editorial coordinators

Epic Comics

JO DUFFY

english adaptation

STEVE OLIVE

artist

MICHAEL HIGGINS

letterer

MIKE ROCKWITZ

HARRY CANDELARIO

MICHAEL HEISLER

production

MARK CHIARELLO

editorial assistant, Epic edition

ARCHIE GOODWIN

editor, Epic edition

War in the streets. Neo-Tokyo in the thirty-eighth year after World War III shakes with the thunder of careening motorcycles, rings with the clatter of brutal combat. With chains, with pipes, with the very machines they ride, members of the young fugitive Kaneda's motorcycle gang move to avenge themselves upon their ruthless rivals, the Clowns. But the Clowns have a new leader, Tetsuo. Once Kaneda called him a friend. Now everyone calls him a monster. Altered by forces he does not understand, Tetsuo has become a psychic powered giant. Yet for all his power, he teeters on the brink of madness, beyond control of even the mysterious government forces who helped place him on this path in the hope of countering someone even more deadly, even more threatening. Someone called . . . AKIRA.

KATSUHIRO OTOMO'S

AKIRA



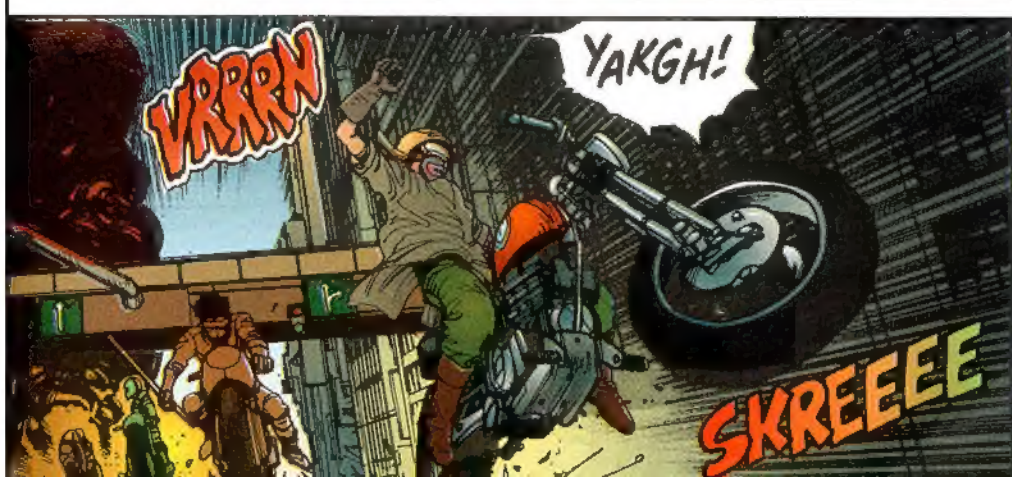
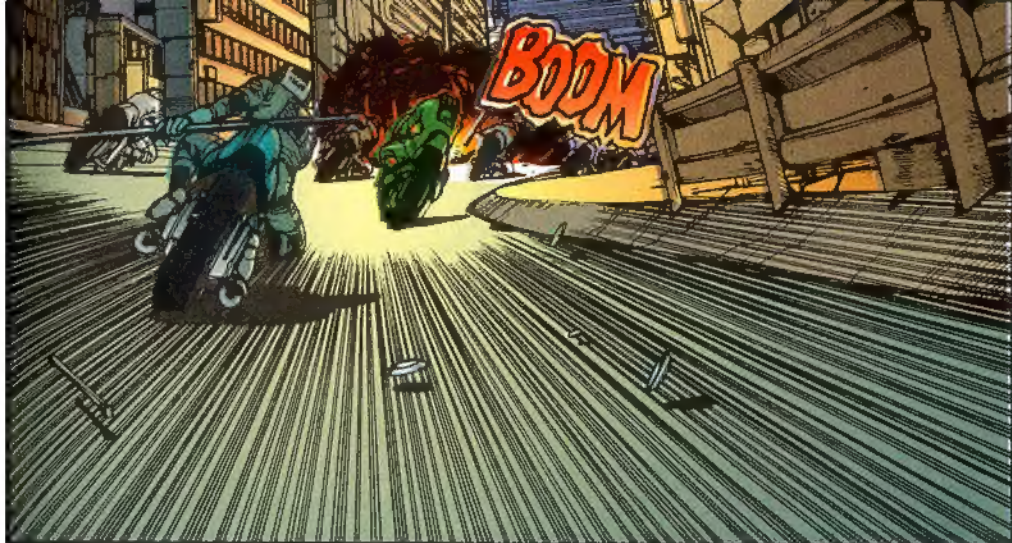
This scan produced by:

X-FUTURE

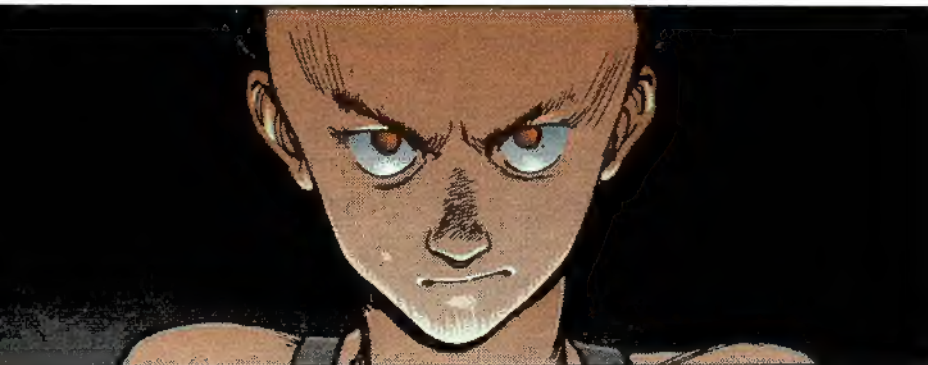
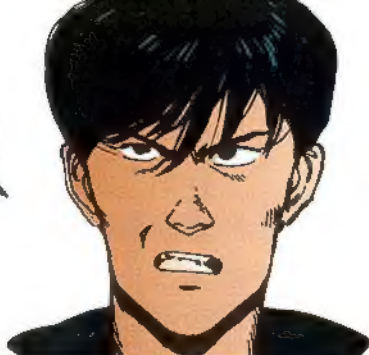
I love um

I buy um

I preserve um



YOU
WENT
TOO
FAR...



DIDN'T YOU,
TETSUO?!

VRRRRRRRRN

